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EVEN AS A YOUNG DUDE, DAVID BOWIE WAS CONTRIBUTING SONGS AND MUSIC TO THE MOVIES. METRO LOOKS AT SOME OF THE DIAMONDS AND THE DOGS PAGES 32 & 33

Falling hemlines

Designers thinking pink, ladylike, oversized and fur – lots and lots of fur – for fall fashion PAGE 37

Ottawa curler gets the win for Canucks

Rachel Homan's two victories tie Canada with Russia PAGE 43

Canada cuts foreign aid to China

CIDA rethink. In 2010-2011, Canadians sent close to $30 million in aid to China

Canada has cut direct foreign aid to China in an international-assistance overhaul. It's one of 14 countries that get their aid cut or eliminated as the Canadian International Development Agency chops $377 million by 2014-2015.

CIDA is aiming to target funds more precisely and work more with the private sector.

Many have questioned why China gets aid from Canada, given its economic status, military muscle and increasing influence on world affairs, including a growing development budget of its own.

"When you go to the eastern part of China, which is probably where 99 per cent of Canadians, if they go to China, do go, places like Beijing or Shanghai, they would put to shame almost any Canadian city," said Bruce Muirhead, associate vice-president of external research at the University of Waterloo, who studied the issue of Canadian aid to China. "But if you go a little bit into the interior, it's a completely different situation. ... It's not the urban areas where CIDA puts its money, it's in the rural areas. Those people really need help."

Most aid went to programs helping China reform legal and environmental policy.

Aid will continue through international groups and humanitarian channels, if needed, but CIDA Minister Julian Fantino says the end of the China program is recognition of the country's emergence as the world's second-largest economy. THE CANADIAN PRESS

FIRST NATIONS READY FOR A FIGHT ON KEYSTONE: CHIEF

Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation Chief Allan Adam speaks during a news conference Wednesday in Ottawa. Adam and others said First Nations peoples are poised to fight proposed pipelines such as the Keystone and Northern Gateway projects. See page 9.

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Across Canada

Ottawa tumbles in city-ranking list

Well, we aren't No. 1 anymore and it's in part due to slower population growth and high housing prices.

After three years of occupying the top spot of MoneySense magazine's Best Places to Live list, Canada's capital has tumbled to sixth place overall and second place among big Canadian cities, while the cow-punching, chuck-wagon-racing oil barons of Calgary are now in first.

"Despite being unseated from the top spot, Ottawa still had a very strong showing," said David Hodges, senior editor at MoneySense, in an email, noting our sixth-place showing is out of 200 Canadian cities.

Among our strengths, Hodges lists good weather, the number of people who walk or bike in the city, the percentage of people who travel to work by public transportation, the average family household income and the percentage of people employed in the arts.

But the biggest factor crimping our ranking was home prices, he wrote.

"Ottawa ranked low on affordability last year (with average prices at $335,300 in 2012), but even more so this year (with average prices now $352,020)," Hodges said.

Calgary, meanwhile, was top ranked in population growth and total sales taxes. Calgary also "rated very high across several major categories, including low unemployment, high incomes, average household income and average household net worth."

SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO

Winds blow vapour from buildings on the Ottawa skyline as temperatures hover near -40 C with windchill in Ottawa on January 24. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

City's emissions-reduction progress tough to track

Environment.
Ottawa to host greenhouse-emissions roundtable on Saturday

ALEX BOUTILIER
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A 2009 decision to change the way the City of Ottawa accounts for air pollution has made it virtually impossible to determine how the city has fared in its efforts to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions.

The city's 2004 Air Quality and Climate Change Action Plan, now expired, set a target of reducing corporate and community GHG emissions to 20 per cent below 1990 levels by 2012.

But because of a decision in 2009 to change the way the city tracked GHG emissions, it's hard to say if the city hit those targets. Instead, 2004 is now used as a baseline measure.

An emailed statement, which the city's corporate-communications division said could be attributed to environmental-services manager Dixon Weir, indicates that changes in the methodology of emissions calculation and reporting rendered the 1990 baseline inaccurate.

An interview, requested last week by Metro, was not granted. The city would not say what progress it's made on its GHG targets.

There was some indication, prior to the change, that the city was making progress — at least as far as their own operations were concerned.

"The City of Ottawa as a corporate entity emitted 75,131 tonnes in 2004," reads a 2007 report on GHG emissions.

"This represented a 24 per cent (GHG) emissions decrease below 1990 levels from the City of Ottawa."

But in 2008, total emissions were listed as 293,478 tonnes. Because of the accounting change, it's impossible to compare apples to apples. It's not clear if an adjusted 1990 level exists.

It wouldn't surprise Trevor Haché if Ottawa failed to reach the stated target — he doubts many jurisdictions had accurate data to compare.

"I would be surprised if many of the jurisdictions who agreed to use 1990 as the measure actually had good data on just exactly what their emissions were at that time," said Haché, with Ecology Ottawa, on Wednesday.

The city will hold a roundtable on GHG emissions and climate change on Saturday. The event is fully booked.

Crime. Wife of RCMP officer accused of sexually assaulting boy denied bail

The wife of an RCMP officer accused of sexually assaulting an 11-year-old boy living with the couple wept as she was denied bail in Ottawa Wednesday ahead of her trial.

The 34-year-old woman's eyes welled up as justice of the peace Louise Logue enumerated the evidence against her and gave her reasoning against release. The woman was quickly handed tissues by one of her defence lawyers.

Overcome with emotion, her bottom lip trembling and eyes brimming with tears, one of the Ottawa police investigators in the case left the courtroom quickly after hearing the ruling.

Logue made her decision after listening for three days to the evidence police had gathered against the woman following her arrest. She was charged Feb. 14 with multiple counts of assault, assault with a weapon, forcible confinement and failure to provide the necessaries of life.

Her 41-year-old husband, an RCMP officer on administrative leave from his job since May 2011, faces similar charges and one count of aggravated sexual assault.

The accusations came after the 11-year-old boy who lived with the couple was allegedly found malnourished and exhausted by a neighbour who discovered the youth slumped in a snowbank near their home in Ottawa's west end.

The boy was taken into the care of the Children's Aid Society following the arrests. Police sources told The Canadian Press in February that handcuffs were used to keep the child in the basement of the couple's house for months.

Two publication bans put on the case prevent the woman and her husband from being named to protect the identity of the alleged victims. A standard bail-hearing publication ban also bars reporting details of evidence in the case presented at the bail hearing.

GRAHAM LANKTREE/METRO

Train. Freight derailment delays Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto VIA Rail service

Via Rail said passenger train service was interrupted Wednesday afternoon on its busy route between Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto after a Canadian Pacific freight train derailed southwest of Ottawa.

Via said 10 of its trains were affected by the derailment and it was using buses to transport passengers for at least part of their trip. Delays in both directions along the route were expected to continue. However, Via said passengers travelling on direct routes between Montreal and Toronto that did not go through Ottawa would not be affected.

The Transportation Safety Board said investigators were deployed at the site where five CP freight cars derailed Wednesday at Smiths Falls. No injuries were reported.

METRO/THE CANADIAN PRESS

OPP Const. Shawn Kelly leaves the Ottawa courthouse where his expertise as an "accident reconstructionist" is being weighed by a judge. GRAHAM LANKTREE/METRO

OPP: Accused's car crossed lane

Fatal crash. Collision analysis indicates Dr. Christy Natsis's car crossed three metres into oncoming lane, says expert at trial

GRAHAM LANKTREE
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Debris found at the scene of a deadly crash involving a Pembroke dentist accused of impaired driving suggests the collision happened in the lane of the driver who was killed in the crash, an OPP expert testified Wednesday.

"Debris in this particular case was further west from the gouge mark and on the eastbound lane," OPP technical collision investigator Const. Shawn Kelly said of deep marks in the road and a trail of debris caused by the force of the pick-up truck and SUV colliding. "All these pieces suggest the collision event occurred in the eastbound lane."

Ottawa resident Brian Casey, who died in the head-on crash, was travelling in that eastbound lane in his white Dodge pickup just before the crash for which Dr. Christy Natsis has been charged with impaired driving causing death, dangerous driving and having over 80 milligrams of alcohol in her bloodstream.

Kelly's ability to give expert testimony was challenged earlier in the week by Natsis's defence lawyer Michael Edelson, who argued none of his testimony should be admitted because of "bias, lack of independence and partiality."

Judge Neil Kozloff dismissed those arguments Wednesday. "I'm going to permit Const. Kelly to complete his testimony," Kozloff said as the trial resumed. "He may be led through his investigation, including the physical observations he made at the scene, the measurements he made at the scene and any other investigative steps taken at the scene." Kozloff is expected to rule later to what extent Kelly's testimony may be accepted as "expert."

The Crown's case rests largely on Kelly's testimony now since breathalyzer evidence showing Natsis' blood well over the legal limit was thrown out earlier in the week by Kozloff.

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A ‘fantastic honour’: Artist

GG’s visual arts awards. Works by this year’s winners on display at the National Gallery

JOE LOFARO
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The National Gallery of Canada is giving the public a free sneak peek on Thursday at seven works of art recently bestowed with the prestigious 2013 Governor General’s Awards in Visual and Media Arts, including work by an artist who grew up in Ottawa.

Melding his passion for music and art, composer Gordon Monahan created Resonant Platinum Records using four aluminum discs, piano wire and small motors.

Each disc is suspended by piano wire that hangs from the ceiling. The motors at the top act as loudspeakers and send vibrations down the wire and into the discs, which look more like sci-fi flying saucers.

The mechanism reproduces sound from a computer. When you lean toward the disc, a soft, ambient vibration tickles your eardrum.

“Because it’s such a primitive reproduction system, we’re not hearing the sounds clearly,” Monahan said on Wednesday at a media preview of the exhibition. “If we were to actually just listen to those sound files on a loudspeaker system, you’d recognize the music.”

The Canada Council for the Arts helped organize the show. Other pieces of art include a curtain of glass beads that forms a snapshot titled Haitians Watch, by Colette Whiten and Greg Payce’s three-dimensional ceramic silhouettes in a work titled Pantheon.

The honourees were set to receive their awards at Rideau Hall on Wednesday night. Monahan called the award a “fantastic honour,” given that he only recently forayed into the world of visual arts.

“The established scene views you as a composer. They don’t think of me as a gallery artist. This award kind of helps to develop that recognition more,” he said.

Composer and visual artist Gordon Monahan listens to an aluminum disc produce sound in an art installation that won him a 2013 Governor General’s Award in Visual and Media Arts. His creation and others are on display at the National Gallery of Canada from March 22 to June 23. JOE LOFARO/METRO

Taylor, 20, says she doesn’t know where she would be without the help of the Youville Centre in Ottawa’s Sandy Hill neighbourhood. CONTRIBUTED/DWAYNE BROWN

Samaritan ‘toasting’ young moms with benefit

Out of sheer generosity, Elaine Larsen is putting together live music and a photo exhibition to raise money for Ottawa’s Youville Centre, which helps young mothers get their high-school diplomas and get them into the workforce.

“I realized one day that I had the capacity to do it, and once I realized that, I thought, ‘Why not?’ Larsen said on Wednesday. “I’m from Ottawa. And I’ve realized that giving to my community is something that has become very important for me in my life.”

For $20, guests at A Toast to the Ladies can take in a diverse lineup of local entertainment, from the music played by Ottawa band The Love Machine and food from area grocers, to artwork by local creators. Larsen said proceeds from the cover charge will help mothers at Youville Centre.

Taylor, 20, who spoke on condition that Metro use only her first name, has been going to the not-for-profit centre in Sandy Hill for the past three years after struggling through what she described as a “rough” childhood.

She dropped out of high school when she was in Grade 9 and landed on Youville’s doorstep when her daughter was 14 months old.

“Everyday life pretty much sucked. My parents weren’t around,” she said. “I just relied on friends.”

She said Youville helped her figure out what she wanted to do with her life while teaching her parenting skills.

“I’m graduating this June, which is the most amazing thing ever because I never thought in a million years I’d be graduating,” said Taylor, who is set to start studying at Algonquin College next fall.

A Toast to the Ladies will be held on Friday at the School of the Photographic Arts on Dalhousie Street from 6 to 9 p.m.

JOE LOFARO/METRO

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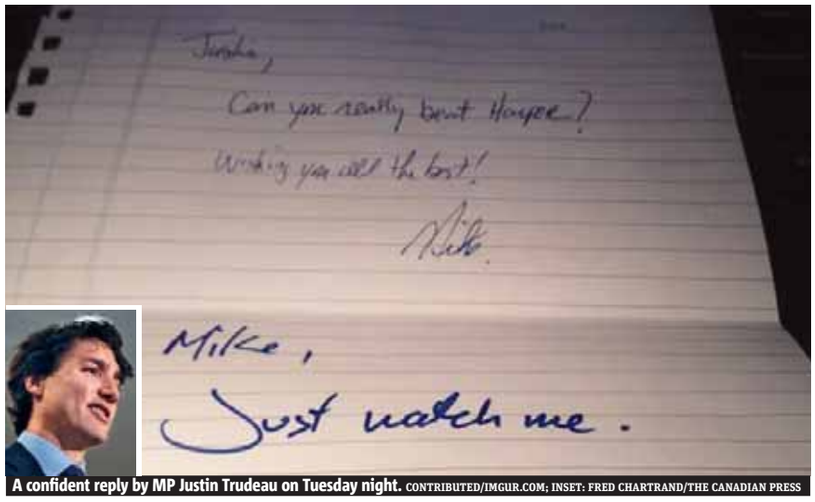

A confident reply by MP Justin Trudeau on Tuesday night. CONTRIBUTED/IMGUR.COM; INSET: FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Just watch me' be PM: Trudeau

Scribbled reply. Liberal leadership contender echoes father's words

Forty-two years after it was first uttered — in very different circumstances — the Trudeau challenge is back.

"Just watch me," Justin Trudeau scribbled in a note on Tuesday night, when a fellow passenger on his flight asked whether the Liberal leadership contender could defeat Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

"Justin, can you really beat Harper?" Michael Kydd wrote on a note he passed to Trudeau. "Wishing you all the best!"

Trudeau replied by invoking his father's famous phrase during the FLQ crisis of 1970, when a band of Quebec separatists kidnapped a British diplomat and a cabinet minister.

Then-prime minister Pierre Trudeau was asked by a reporter how far he would go in the suspension of civil liberties during the crisis.

"Well, just watch me," he said at the time.

It turns out Kydd will be "just watching" Trudeau, however. Kydd acknowledged he's a lifelong Conservative.

Harper's communications director, Andrew MacDougall, was having some fun, too, on Wednesday. MacDougall put out his own scribbled note. A photo was posted on Twitter with a question: "Hey Andrew, what do you think about Justin Trudeau's 'just watch me' quote? Best, Dom."

The reply: "Hey Dom: Fuddle Duddle! Andrew."

("Fuddle duddle" was what Pierre Trudeau claimed he said during a stormy session in the Commons. Others said it was a well-known obscenity.) TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'Ugly' politics. Commons speaker forced to break up partisan name-calling

Things certainly got a bit ugly in the House of Commons.

With Opposition accusations flying over the resignation last week of Labrador MP Peter Penashue, Prime Minister Stephen Harper again heaped praise on his former intergovernmental affairs minister.

Harper told the Commons he expected the Conservatives would run a clean campaign in a byelection in which Penashue has pledged to run.

But he also suggested the Liberals were already running a "negative, ugly campaign" against Penashue.

That prompted an exchange with interim Liberal Leader Bob Rae, with the Commons speaker forced to break up the verbal melee.

Rae told the House the Conservatives had only to look in the mirror if they wanted to see ugly.

Penashue resigned his cabinet post and his seat in the Commons last week after Elections Canada found his election campaign had accepted 28 ineligible donations.

He has since pledged to run in a byelection and is being supported by the prime minister, even though Elections Canada is continuing to investigate. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Costly cleanup

Nuclear waste spikes deficit by $2.4 billion

A sudden $2.4-billion revision to Canada's nuclear liabilities has crept up on Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and substantially deepened the deficit for the current fiscal year.

Analysts say there is probably enough wiggle room in the government numbers this year to absorb the hike without throwing Flaherty's longer-term deficit-reduction plans too far off course.

Atomic Energy of Canada quietly announced Tuesday night that the expected long-term cost for disposing of nuclear waste has risen. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Philip Lane Jr., of the American Yankton Sioux Nation, said Wednesday native groups south of the border will stand with their Canadian cousins in their protest of Northern Gateway and Keystone XL pipelines. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

'We're going to stop these pipelines'

First Nations. Aboriginal groups say stakes are so high, they'll keep fighting Keystone XL and Northern Gateway

An alliance of First Nations leaders is preparing to fight proposed new pipelines in the courts and through unspecified direct action.

Native leaders from Canada and the United States were on Parliament Hill Wednesday to underline opposition to both the Northern Gateway and Keystone XL pipelines.

The first would tie the Alberta oilsands to the West Coast, while the second would send bitumen to refineries on the American Gulf Coast.

Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver said the federal government is consulting with First Nations and is ready to hear their concerns.

"We're making every effort to respond to the concerns we have heard on the West Coast," he said after a caucus meeting.

"They want to do the best for their communities and we want to do the best for their communities as well. So I remain very hopeful."

Some of the chiefs brushed off the federal government's appointment this week of a special envoy to look at tensions between natives and the energy industry.

Chief Allan Adam of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation said natives are determined to block the pipelines.

"It's going to be a long, hot summer," he said at a news conference.

Phil Lane Jr. of the American Yankton Sioux said native groups south of the border will stand with their Canadian cousins.

"We're going to stop these pipelines one way or another," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Targeted? Shooter kills head of Colorado prisons

Colorado's top state prison official was shot and killed when he answered the front door of his house, setting off a hunt for the shooter and raising questions about whether the attack had anything to do with his job.

Tom Clements, 58, was shot around 8:30 p.m. Tuesday in Monument, north of Colorado Springs, and a witness reported a person driving away in a dark-coloured "boxy" car that had its engine running at the time of the shooting, authorities said.

Investigators were exploring all possibilities, including that the shooting could have been related to Clements' job as executive director of the Colorado Department of Corrections.

While the motive of the killing wasn't immediately clear, similar attacks on officials have been on the rise in the U.S., said Glenn McGovern, a California investigator who tracks such incidents worldwide.

The attacks are often motivated by revenge, said McGovern, who has documented more than 133 attacks since 1950. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ethan Yellowbird

Boy's teen killers say they're sorry

Three teens convicted in the shooting death of a five-year-old Alberta boy have apologized. Each of the youths, who can't be identified, told Ethan Yellowbird's family they were sorry for taking the young boy's life.

The trio came up with a plan to shoot at the house on the Samson Cree reserve in July 2011, and a bullet went through a wall and struck Ethan in the head as he was sleeping in his bed.

The teens have pleaded guilty to manslaughter.

The Crown has asked that all three serve the maximum youth sentence — two years in custody followed by one year of supervision. Defence lawyers are seeking sentences from as little as six months in open custody to as much as one year behind bars for their clients. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Teen football players

Girl, 13, taunted in sexual-assault case

Two members of the Torrington, Conn. High School football team have been charged with sexually assaulting a 13-year-old girl, who has been taunted on social media sites in recent weeks by dozens of classmates upset at the allegations.

The Register Citizen reports the two 18-year-old football players, Edgar Gonzalez and Joan Toribio, have been charged with felony second-degree sexual assault and other crimes in an investigation that began last month. Both have pleaded not guilty.

Details of the allegations are sealed from public view.

The newspaper reports social media posts by classmates taunting the accuser have included vulgar language and blamed her for ruining the players' lives. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pregnancy. DNA from three researched to prevent passing on genetic diseases

Britain's fertility regulator says it has found broad public support for in vitro fertilization techniques that allow babies to be created with DNA from three people for couples at risk of passing on potentially fatal genetic diseases.

It also found there was no evidence to suggest the techniques were unsafe, but said further research was still necessary.

Critics, however, slammed the decision as a breach of ethics, saying there were already safe methods like egg donation to allow people to have children without mitochondria defects.

Britain's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority began a public discussion of the topic at the government's request last year.

"Although some people have concerns about the safety of these techniques, we found that they trust the scientific experts and the regulator to know when it is appropriate to make them available to patients," Lisa Jardine, chair of the group, said in a statement Wednesday.

British law forbids altering a human egg or an embryo before transferring it into a woman, so such treatments are currently only allowed for research. Similar research is going on in the U.S.

About one in 200 children every year in Britain is born with a mitochondrial disorder. Mistakes in the mitochondria's genetic code can result in serious diseases. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Genetic-disease research

"The sole aim (is) preventing a potentially fatal condition from being passed down to the next generation."

Marita Polschmidt, director of research at the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign

All-smiles with Baby on Board

The Duchess of Cambridge smiles at the Queen after she receives a "Baby on Board" badge. It's available to pregnant passengers on London's Tube to let others know they may need a seat. The Royals were celebrating the underground's 150th anniversary. MATT DUNHAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OMA. Ontario doctors want crackdown on antibiotic use in farming

The Ontario Medical Association wants the federal and provincial governments to crack down on antibiotic use in farming.

The organization is issuing a call to arms on the problem of antibiotic resistance, warning the world is in danger of losing these drugs because of misuse.

A policy paper drafted by the OMA says Ontario should ban the use of antibiotics as growth promoters in food-animal production.

Farmers currently feed antibiotics to healthy animals both to prevent them from becoming ill and to accelerate growth.

Many more tonnes of the drugs are used in agricultural operations than in human medicine and experts say the practice is fuelling development of resistance.

OMA president Dr. Doug Weir says Canada has been slower off the mark to act to protect antibiotics than countries in Europe and the United States. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has barred the disease-prevention use of a class of antibiotics called cephalosporins in animal production, but the practice is not banned in Canada.

The OMA says governments should close loopholes that allow farmers to import the drugs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

'A serious problem'

OMA president Dr. Doug Weir says Canadians do not appear to understand that if antibiotic use isn't curbed, the world faces a future in which some infections will be incurable.

- The OMA wants access to antibiotics for agricultural operations to be limited to cases where veterinarians write prescriptions. Currently farmers use the drugs without surveillance.

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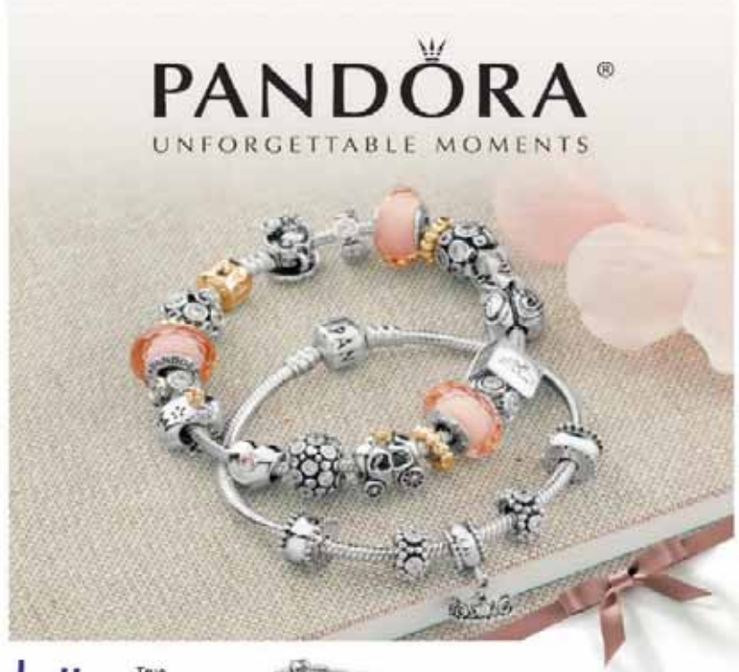

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Networks crash at S. Korean banks, media companies

Cyberattack. North Korea is suspected of being behind the attack that paralyzed ATMs across the country

An employee works near a computer with an error message at the Seoul newsroom of all-news cable channel YTN as the South Korean broadcaster's computer network was paralyzed on Wednesday. Computer networks at major South Korean banks and top TV broadcasters crashed en masse. YONHAP/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A cyberattack caused computer networks at major South Korean banks and top TV broadcasters to crash simultaneously Wednesday, paralyzing bank machines across the country and prompting speculation of North Korean involvement.

Screens went blank at 2 p.m., the state-run Korea Information Security Agency said, and more than seven hours later some systems were still down.

Police and South Korean officials couldn't immediately determine responsibility and North Korea's state media made no immediate comments on the shutdown. But some experts suspected a cyberattack orchestrated by Pyongyang. The rivals have exchanged threats amid joint U.S.-South Korean military drills and in the wake of UN sanctions meant to punish North Korea over its nuclear test last month.

The network paralysis took place just days after North Korea accused South Korea and the U.S. of staging a cyberattack that shut down its websites for two days last week. Loxley Pacific, the Thailand-based Internet service provider, confirmed the North Korean outage but did not say what caused it.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2011 massacre

Norway sets $19M to fight terror

The Norwegian government has pledged an extra 109 million kroner ($19.4 million) this year to improve terror preparedness following the July 22, 2011, massacre when a right-wing extremist killed 77 people in a bomb attack and shooting rampage.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Potential arms race

N. Korean bank sanctions sought

A senior Republican lawmaker pushing for tougher U.S. banking sanctions on North Korea says the isolated nation's development of a nuclear weapon could trigger an atomic arms race in East Asia. House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Ed Royce said Wednesday that South Korea, Japan and Taiwan might seek nuclear weapons if Pyongyang miniaturizes a nuclear warhead it can mount on a missile. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Regime, rebels call for probe of alleged chemical attack

Syrian civil war. Both sides blame each other for the incident without offering clear proof

Syria's government and rebels on Wednesday both demanded an international investigation into an alleged chemical-weapons attack, as the country's feared arsenal became the latest propaganda tool in the two-year-old civil war.

President Barack Obama said the United States is investigating whether chemical weapons have been deployed in Syria, but noted that he is "deeply skeptical" of claims by President Bashar Assad's regime that rebel forces were behind such an attack.

Syrian girls paint their faces with colours of the Syrian revolutionary flag during a festival in Aleppo, Syria, Wednesday. AMC/ALEPPO MEDIA CENTRE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"Once we establish the facts, I have made clear that the use of chemical weapons is a game changer," Obama said in a news conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem.

The use of chemical weapons by either side is a nightmare scenario. Along with its warnings about Assad, the West is just as concerned that rebel forces, including some linked to al-Qaida, could get their hands on Syria's chemical-weapons supplies.

Despite the importance, any clear confirmation of the nature of the attack that took place Tuesday in the northern village of Khan al-Assal, killing at least 31 people, is unlikely. Syria's government seals off areas it controls to journalists and outside observers.

If confirmed, it would be the first time a chemical weapon has been used in Syria's war that has already killed an estimated 70,000 people.

Syria's UN Ambassador Bashar Jaafari called the attack "very serious and alarming and unacceptable and unethical." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tensions with Iran. Obama pledges support for Israel

Eager to reassure an anxious ally, U.S. President Barack Obama on Wednesday promised to work closely with Israel and do whatever is necessary to keep Iran from obtaining nuclear arms, "the world's worst weapons."

Obama, meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on his first visit to the Jewish state as president, said of Iran's nuclear ambitions: "We prefer to resolve this diplomatically and there is still time to do so." But he added that "all options are on the table" if diplomacy falls short.

Netanyahu, at Obama's side for a joint news conference, said that while he appreciated U.S. efforts to thwart Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons through diplomacy and sanctions, those tools "must be augmented by a clear and credible threat of military action."

Seeking to alter a perception among many Israelis that his government has been less supportive of Israel than previous U.S. administrations, Obama declared the U.S.-Israeli alliance "eternal." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. President Barack Obama and Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu after a joint news conference in Jerusalem, Wednesday. CAROLYN KASTER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Egypt

Judges suggest dissolving Muslim Brotherhood

A panel of judges has recommended the dissolution of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamist group from which President Mohammed Morsi hails. The recommendation is significant given charges that the Brotherhood is the real power behind Morsi. The recommendation was made to a high administrative court expected to rule this month in a case over the Brotherhood's legitimacy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ban lifted

Jews of Egypt film to air in cinemas

The director of a documentary on Egypt's Jewish community says authorities have lifted a ban on showing the film in local cinemas. The Jews of Egypt follows the lives of the community in the 20th century. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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All giant squid likely belong to one species: Study

Supersized sea beasts. Tentacled behemoths are among largest invertebrates on Earth, reaching up to 18 metres in length

A giant squid attacks bait.
TSUNEMI KUBODERA OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE MUSEUM OF JAPAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

They're the stuff of myth and B-grade horror movies, giant tentacled sea monsters roaming the deep in search of prey.

Giant squid have tuned up on East Coast shores for hundreds of years, and now new research is shining some light on the sea monsters.

An international team headed by Danish researchers tested DNA samples from 43 giant squid from around the world — including a specimen from Newfoundland — and were stunned to find that there is likely just a single species of the massive cephalopod.

The genetic diversity among the samples was lower than almost any species ever reported, said Tom Gilbert, a researcher from the Natural History Museum of Denmark at the University of Copenhagen.

"That lack of diversity and no population structure is just crazy. We just cannot explain it easily once you start thinking that this is an animal that lives everywhere," Gilbert said in an email interview. The study, published Wednesday, left researchers with several theories, including that they may have come close to extinction and rebounded. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Witness draws federal parties into Quebec corruption inquiry

No followup. Lawyer's questioning about donation of fake-billing proceeds to political parties leads briefly to federal level

Quebec's corruption inquiry has heard that illegal political financing happened beyond the world of provincial politics and also permeated the federal level.

The issue, briefly raised Wednesday at the inquiry, was vaguely addressed and immediately dropped.

An engineering executive was describing how he used fake-billing schemes to funnel cash from his company to parties as illegal provincial contributions.

Then, when asked whether he used that practice to contribute to federal parties, Rosaire Sauriol, the vice-president of Dessau Inc., responded, "Yes."

And that was it. There were no more details about which parties might have received the cash, how much they received, and when they received it.

The mandate of Quebec's corruption inquiry does not extend to the federal level — so any questions about politics beyond the province are deemed out-of-bounds.

But Sauriol's answer is enough to raise questions about whether federal parties were financed with illegal cash and, if so, which ones. There have been limits since 2004 on corporate donations to federal parties; corporate donations were banned entirely in 2006.

The events that Sauriol has been describing in his testimony occurred as late as 2009.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rosaire Sauriol, vice-president at Dessau, is seen in a screegrab from a video feed as he testifies at the Charbonneau inquiry looking into corruption in the Quebec construction industry on Wednesday in Montreal.

CHARBONNEAU COMMISSION/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Widening scope

More than provincial

Wednesday's brief exchange was a rare example of the inquiry tiptoeing, however gingerly, beyond the confines of Quebec provincial politics.

The inquiry has also twice raised the name of Sen. Leo Housakos — although he has not been accused of any wrongdoing.

At one point this week, an inquiry lawyer suddenly began asking the head of another engineering firm, BPR, about the senator's work and the company and his appointment to the upper chamber of the Parliament of Canada.

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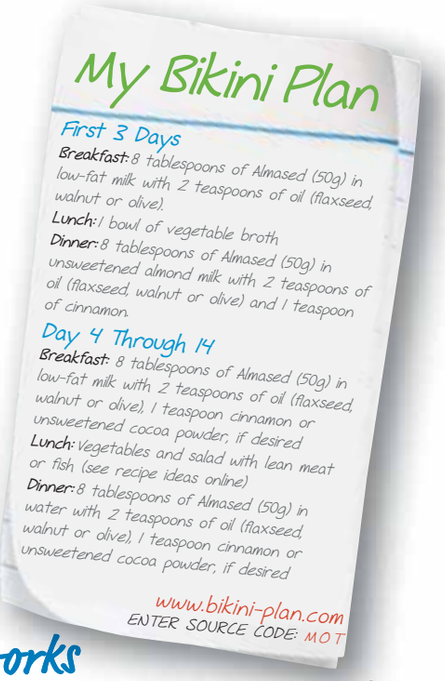
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States's offer of aid to gun maker pulled 4 days after shooting

Newtown, Conn.
School killings appear to be a secondary factor in ending deal

Just days before 20 children and six educators were killed at a Connecticut school in December, state development officials offered the maker of the rifle used in the massacre a $1 million loan to bring new jobs to the state.

The offer, capping six months of negotiations between the Department of Economic and Community Development and Freedom Group, was dropped after private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management announced it would sell Freedom Group, manufacturer of the Bushmaster AR-15.

A weapon similar to the one used in the Newtown, Conn., school shooting.
JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

The deal was ended four days after the killings, according to a letter released in response to an open records request.

The Hartford Courant first reported the deal.

Deputy agency commissioner Ronald Angelo said Wednesday that Cerberus' announcement made the deal untenable. The announced sale led to several "cordial, amicable" phone conversations between the state and the company about the deal no longer being workable. He said the killings also were a factor.

"It would be naive to think that that would not weigh on people's minds," he said, referring to the shooting deaths.

Days after the killings, investors started to avoid some of the nation's largest gun makers. Cerberus Capital Management announced it would sell the maker of the rifle used in the massacre, which it called a "watershed event."

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Sappy tale

Thieves illegally tapping maple trees

Thieves are illegally tapping maple trees on private property in Maine and stealing sap that is used to make maple syrup.

Forest Ranger Jeff Currier says the Maine Forest Service has gotten a dozen complaints from landowners finding taps in their trees with buckets or jugs underneath to collect the sap.

Currier says he first started getting sap theft reports about five years ago, but says the number of complaints is up this year. No arrests have been made, but the culprits could face theft, malicious mischief and trespassing charges.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture says a gallon of Maine syrup has sold for about $50 US on average at retail in recent years.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A drop of fresh sap falls from a tap in a maple tree in Bowdoin, Maine.

JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

Live deer in trunk of car gives officer big surprise

Police investigating. Owner of car says he thought he had killed the deer, but it was probably just stunned

Talk about junk in the trunk.

A public-safety officer checking a suspicious car parked behind a southwestern Michigan motel early Tuesday was more than a little surprised when a deer climbed out of the trunk, stumbled onto the road and bolted into nearby woods.

TV stations WWMT, WZZM and WOOD report that the driver told Kalamazoo officer David Miller he hit the deer on the road — thought he had killed it — and was taking it home for his family to eat.

Squad-car dashboard-camera footage shows Miller opening the trunk, then quickly trying to close it as he spots the deer. The animal escapes from the trunk, rear first, stumbles and rolls, then dashes off.

Lt. Stacey Geik says the collision probably just stunned the deer.

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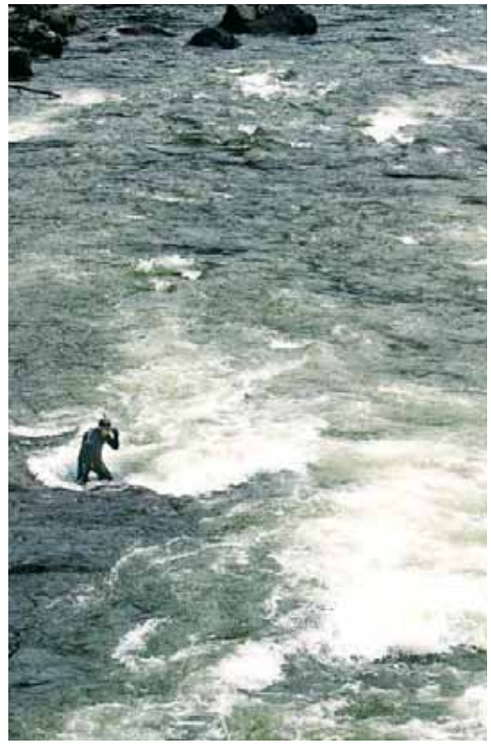

Not for the faint of heart

Russ Ricketts of Leavenworth, Wash., stands on a rock March 14 in the Wenatchee River in Tumwater Canyon to get a better view of the rapids ahead. He'll often scout rapids, looking for entrapments and eddies, before entering a river. To Ricketts and Matt Collins, also of Leavenworth, North Central Washington is a snorkelling mecca. The two men do this all year.

MIKE BONNICKSEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bryan Baeumler, host of hit TV shows like House of Bryan and Leave it to Bryan. CONTRIBUTED

Modern spaces and decor on a dime

Ottawa Home & Garden Show. Over 350 exhibitors and experts will be on hand

If you're hunting for modern and innovative ideas for upgrading your living space, head out to this year's Ottawa Home & Garden Show.

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Or, if you're keen to renovate your existing abode, don't miss Bryan Baeumler, veteran contractor and award winning host of hit TV shows like House of Bryan and Leave it to Bryan. He provides tips on what to do – and not to do – on any budget when upgrading your home. Catch him Saturday, March 23 at 1 p.m.

Wondering what to do with your walls? Mary Taggart, editor of Ottawa At Home magazine, will be on hand to give her views on creating fabulous accents and wall art.

Local designer Lee-Ann LaCroix will be around to share her ideas on how to take a low cost item you could pick up at a garage sale or second hand store – or even something you've already stashed in your attic – and with a little "elbow grease" repaint, refinish, reupholster or add new details to convert it into an elegant or funky piece.

She's also got fabulous ideas for transforming your Easter table from the Friday night drop-in family meal to the Sunday brunch buffet and then to the more formal sit-down Easter dinner. "It's all about creative ideas, like changing the runners or the center piece, adding decorative eggs, mixing and matching the plates, and perhaps having stenciled napkins," she says. And if you're going out, LaCroiz has lots of hostess gift ideas for the holidays. Watch out for her and her friends at the Home Diva on a Dime; New Season, New Look; and Dual Purpose Design presentations.

PAULINE ANDERSON

There are many seminars you can enjoy. CONTRIBUTED

Show Info

Organizers expect upwards of 30,000 people to attend this year's Ottawa Home & Garden Show March 21 to 24, held for the second consecutive year at the Ernst and Young Centre (formerly the CE Centre), 4899 Uplands Dr.
Bring the kids along. The show's great line-up for youngsters includes musical performances, cooking demos, face painting, an interactive craft station, and a fun-filled Friday of Mad Science.
For more information and to purchase tickets visit ottawahomeshow.com

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THE REAL ESTATE EDGE

BY MARNIE BENNETT

BUYERS AND SELLERS CAN KICK ANXIETIES TO THE CURB

As a homebuyer, you've got your pocketbook – and your heart – on the line. What if something should go wrong? While warranty programs for new homes and condos are mandatory in most of Canada, most resale buyers aren't given the same peace of mind. If the roof leaks or the furnace conks out after you've taken possession, it's a big blow.

That's why Bennett Property Shop Realty is launching our complimentary Home Service Warranty program. After much research, I'm convinced that it's the best way to serve our clients. While coverage doesn't apply to every component of a newly purchased home, it is surprisingly extensive: appliances, water pipes, roofs, furnaces, water heaters and air conditioners are all under warranty. If your air conditioner blows in the middle of a hot spell, you pay a $50 deductible for the repair, and you're good to go.

What's in it for the seller? According to BusinessWeek magazine, homes with a warranty attract a higher selling price - between 2.2 and 3 per cent higher, on average. Think about it: 3 per cent on a $300,000 home is $9,000 extra in your pocket. The numbers also suggest that homes with warranties sell up to 50 per cent faster than homes without. Anyone who's been through the anxiety of wondering if their house will sell "on time" can appreciate the significance of this.

I'm really excited about this new initiative. I know it will help our sellers and buyers, both financially and emotionally. By alleviating frazzled nerves, we can help our clients focus on a beautiful future.

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Marnie Bennett, broker, marketing director for Bennett Property Shop Realty, a full premium service real estate brokerage specializing in marketing and selling new and resale homes, condominiums and investment real estate. OTTAWAREALESTATEEDGE.COM

Colours of the year

Trends in Paint Colours. Watch for shades of blue, especially with green overtones, on more walls this season.

An exquisite aquamarine tone called Tide Pools was chosen by the colour experts at Pratt & Lambert Paints as its 2013 colour of the year. The tone evokes sparkling oceans and the outdoors and "is reflective of nature and of light and the colour of glass," says Donna Schroeder, a colour expert at Pratt & Lambert.

TEach year, Schroeder and her team troll for trends in colours, textiles and textures before narrowing down their choice of trendy shade of the year.

"We research and pick up cues from different trade shows, seeing what's in the news and what's in fashion, and we take that all together, kind of connecting the dots, to narrow down what we think will influence colour palettes for the next year," says Schroeder.

Not only would the blue-green hue work on walls, but also in accent pieces. For example, it could be picked up from a wallpaper pattern, pillow fabric, or other home decor accessory.

Blue with a touch of green was also chosen by the Color Marketing Group, an international association of color design professionals, as a dominant upcoming colour trend. The folks there predict warm tropical and watery shades will head the colour movement as environmental issues like water conservation and renewable resources take hold. Blue is stable and comforting and is a universal favorite among young and old alike Shades of blue can be relaxing and calming, but be careful with the tone, as it can also be cold and distant.

What's cool about blue, too, is that it coordinates well with other colours. Staff at Benjamin Moore Paints recommend pairing its top blue shade - Wythe - with the warm storm cloud grey, or creamy white battenberg for a nostalgic feeling. For a more contemporary spin, they suggest putting a blue like nimbus gray with the pinkish blue gypsy love.

But instead of blue, Benjamin Moore opted for its tangy but subtly sweet Lemon Sorbet hue for its 2013 Color of the Year. Yellow, say colour experts there, represents optimism and light.

PAULINE ANDERSON

Benjamin Moore's colour of the year, Lemon Sorbet. CONTRIBUTED

Get decked out this spring

Canadians love the outdoors. At the first hint of warmth we hit the deck and patio. Sharon Grech, the colour and design expert for Benjamin Moore, shares some ideas on how to transform the look of your deck and your home with exterior paint and stain.

Brighten up for spring with colour: "The popularity of grey isn't just an interior trend – grey is a perfect choice to beautify a home's exterior as it never fights with mother nature's own vibrancy," says Grech. "Brick can be painted with our Aura line since its advanced waterborne technology is more durable than ever." Offset a deep grey (like the Kendall Charcoal) with a lighter shade on the trim (such as Rockport Gray) to create some eye-catching contrast. A brightly coloured plant adds a pop of colour to this monochromatic palette. Furniture is a great way to create either a more formal or relaxed look outdoors. Accent with a stylish outdoor rug, some weather proof cushions, decorative outdoor accents, and a thirst-quenching tray of drinks.

Protect the deck: Even pressure treated wood benefits from a protective coat of stain to help it survive Canada's harsh seasons. A professional favourite is Arborcoat, a line of exterior stains, which can be used on any wood surface. They can be tinted a variety of shades and can deliver a semi-transparent to more opaque look.

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See inspiring home and garden designs and products

March 21 to 24.
Nature friendly, time saving and space conserving are the themes of the upcoming Ottawa Home & Garden Show

One of the biggest draws at this year's event is the spacious dream garden featuring almost 1,000 square feet of paths. Stroll through and admire colourful and locally inspired plants, shrubs, trees and flowers, including Ottawa's emblematic tulips. Check out the vertical garden and the rain wall that waters the greenery below. Celebrity gardener Ed Lawrence will also be at the show to offer tips for budding and seasoned green thumbs alike.

Innovative garden and home products are what designer Jean-Michel Gauvreau has been sussing out the world over to feature at the International New Product Showcase. Some of these items are so new they're not even available yet. "They're super eco-friendly, highly modern and very innovative," says Nancy Carrier, show manager.

For example, Gauvreau will bring tiles made of synthetic grass and other materials that snap together to form any manner of designs for your patio or balcony. "They're great if you own a condo and still want greenery but don't have a lot of space," says Carrier.

Looking for novel floor or wall covering? Come and see tiles with built-in LED lighting. These energy-saving pieces are not only decorative indoors, but are also cool when used to illuminate your street number outside.

In keeping with the theme of doing more with smaller spaces, the portable and stackable wine racks, greenery that grows up your wall, and planters you place on top of each other, promise to be hits.

"The planters would be ideal for growing fresh herbs for cooking," says Carrier.

And if you want novel ideas on how to cook with these herbs, as well as edible flowers, in your compact space, kitchen pros will be on hand at the Culinary Showcase. Dining and entertainments experts will also share their ideas for backyard barbecuing, and beer and wine pairings.

PAULINE ANDERSON

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Kitchen trends showcase tailored style

Well appointed, well designed and functional are what consumers are demanding in their remodelled kitchens, according to Carolyn Cheetham, a certified master kitchen and bath designer and vice president, National Kitchen and Bathroom Association (NKBA), who is based in Red Deer, AB.

Those in today's market are savvy and they're looking for clean, tailored lines but with warm details, and they also insist on durability," says Cheetham.

"Buyers are prepared to make investments in high-end appliances and in flooring and countertops that will last, but they have to be high performance," she says.

The modern kitchen blends traditional with contemporary styles – possibly with splashes of glass. It's likely to have a centre island where guests gather, socialize with the host, and help in the meal preparation. Today's kitchen is likely the hub of the home entertainment scene.

Organic and timeless, granite probably tops the list of preferred materials for counter surfaces. Renovators love its "visual movement" and esthetically-pleasing swirls says Cheetham. The next most popular material is quartz.

At the sink, touch-activated and even motion-activated faucets are gaining attention, as are faucets that you pull out from behind the cooktop or range.

These "pot filler" faucets are convenient for anyone having difficulty hauling a heavy pot of water from the sink.

For cabinets, buyers are looking beyond oak and opting for a variety of alternate woods – think bamboo, cherry, ash and mahogany. According to a recent survey of NKBA members, demand for white cabinetry has been rising steadily over the past three years, but Canadians are choosing warmer shades of paint rather than stark whites.

PAULINE ANDERSON

Kitchen designed by Katsioula Beall. CONTRIBUTED

Kitchen designed by Allison McCowan. CONTRIBUTED

Kitchen designed by NKBA member Peter Ross Salerno, CMKBD. PETER RYMWID

Bathroom trends are spa-inspired

New bathroom designs. Beautiful, calming decor with practical features

Canadians who are renovating a bathroom are looking to the future.

The trend today is barrier-free access, although not at the expense of design, says Carolyn Cheetham, a certified master kitchen and bath designer and vice president, National Kitchen and Bathroom Association (NKBA), who is based in Red Deer, AB.

The bathroom renovation project might involve installing a door-less shower with multiple adjustable shower faucets and a bench. The space might be large enough for two people.

At the bathroom counter, there might be a "seamless transition" from the counter itself to an under-mount sink (installed below the countertop surface) says Cheetham.

The look is esthetically pleasing and practical, as the even surface makes it easy to clean.

The revamped vanity might have enough space underneath to accommodate a wheel chair.

"Baby boomers want to stay at home for as long as possible so they're prepared to make the necessary investments," says Cheetham.

She notes that the post-war baby bulge has surpassed the age of 65 years, and so priorities have understandably switched to safety and proper lighting.

But she stresses that the new bathroom designs are beautiful and not institutional and are just as practical and appropriate for the young, as for the older boomer.

A calming decor is another trend of the modern bathroom where more Canadians are retreating for relaxation "People are embracing a spa-like atmosphere in the bathroom," says Cheetham. "They want to feel like they're in a five star hotel."

While white remains the top colour scheme for bathrooms, a recent survey of NKBA members shows that shades of grey are growing in popularity, possibly because they help create a chic space – something to please the modern sophisticated Canadian resident.

PAULINE ANDERSON

Bath designed by John Sylvestre, CKD. KAREN MELVIN

Bath designed by Tia Moras, CMKBD. GARY BEALE

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Furniture trends showcase space-saving features

With more Canadians opting for condo living, smaller apartment-sized pieces of furniture and accessories are more in demand these days. There's a growing selection of glass or acrylic items that keep the living space feeling light and airy rather than cramped.

Pieces that are functional and double-up as storage units are also gaining interest.

For example, you might see a coffee table that has room below for books, CDs, blankets or other items..

There's growing interest in space-saving lighting with clip-lights or decorative wall mounted sconces. You can put these by the bed, in the bathroom or living room, or in the hallway.

Throughout any modern room, you might find accents of gold, metallic and brass that reflect a return to glamorous opulence, a trend predicted by organizers of the furniture industry's annual Canadian Home Furnishings Market.

But there's still huge interest among Canadian buyers in pared-down rustic items that have a handcrafted artisan feel.

While this look can be captured with genuine antiques, it can also be created using modern pieces that are just look well-worn; for example, a new table with a top made from reclaimed wood. You can have fun hunting for such pieces to suit your own tastes and environment.

A room's furniture is usually the main focus, but accents that reflect your lifestyle and individual sense of fashion not only put a unique stamp on your home, but can capture the imagination and bring a room to life.

A hot detail in many homes this year will be nailhead trims – not just on leather chairs and sofas, but also on wood furniture such as chests and buffets, according to the American Home Furnishings Alliance, the largest association of home furnishings companies in the world.

These trims were the accent of choice for new upholstery styles – both traditional and contemporary – as well as for many new wood collections – at a recent furniture industry show.

PAULINE ANDERSON

Furniture for small spaces often gets a sleek, modern look. CONTRIBUTED

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Flaherty shouldn't have messed with mortgage rates, Tory minister says

Not everyone in the Conservative cabinet is backing Jim Flaherty's latest intervention in the mortgage market.

Small Business Minister Maxime Bernier says he believes the finance minister overstepped his bounds by having his office phone Manulife Financial and ask they withdraw their discount on five-year mortgages to 2.89 per cent from 3.09.

Bernier told reporters Wednesday he would not have done it. "Me, personally, I would not dictate to businesses what prices to decide," he said. "It's the market. It's supply and demand that decides the prices. It is the case for interest rates, it is the case for other products too."

Dissension in the ranks

"Me, personally, I would not dictate to businesses what prices to decide."

Small Business Minister Maxime Bernier

In the House of Commons, NDP Leader Tom Mulcair asked which minister — Bernier or Flaherty — speaks for the government. "Which minister has the prime minister's confidence, the minister of small business or the minister of finance?"

Prime Minister Stephen Harper did not respond directly but did appear to echo Flaherty's justification for intervening. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty puts on his annual pre-budget shoes at the Roots Leather Factory in Toronto on Wednesday. A cabinet colleague has criticized Flaherty's intervention in the mortgage market. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Social media giants ignore privacy laws in Canada

Personal data. Sites are supposed to let users know what information is being collected about them — but they rarely do, a researcher says

LUKE SIMCOE
luke.simcoe@metronews.ca

Many of the most prominent social media companies are failing to comply with Canadian privacy laws, says a new report.

The study, authored by University of Victoria researcher Chris Parsons, found sites like Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr are "lacking at best, and entirely negligent at worst," when it comes to things like letting users know what kind of information is collected about them.

Schedule 1 of Canada's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) requires social networking sites, upon request, to hand over information about "the existence, use and disclosure of ... personal information."

However, when Parsons and his colleague filed such requests, only six of the 18 companies queried even responded, and those that did either refused to provide any information or offered incomplete data.

While Google, Facebook and Twitter do provide automated methods for users to access their information, Parsons says users are still unable to get all of their personal data. In particular, he and his colleagues found they weren't given the "metadata" that companies attached to their social media posts.

"We argue that metadata is content," he said. "And when we understand the metadata, we can understand how corporations and law enforcement use that data."

A University of Victoria researcher notes that while some social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, do provide automated ways for users to access their personal data, they do not let users see all of that information. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Waterloo, Ont. BlackBerry co-founders create $100M quantum-computing fund

BlackBerry co-founders Mike Lazaridis and Doug Fregin have established a $100-million fund to commercialize quantum computing, an emerging field that they say could revolutionize information technology.

They say the Waterloo region in southwestern Ontario could be a focal point for new jobs and new industries, much as California's Silicon Valley became a hub for advances in conventional computing.

Lazaridis and Fregin collaborated to found the company formerly known as Research In Motion in 1984, which became Canada's leading high technology company through its pioneering efforts in smartphones. The company recently changed its name to BlackBerry in keeping with its main product line.

Fregin, 53, retired from RIM in 2007 after serving as vice-president of operations.

Lazaridis is the more prominent of the two, having served as co-chairman and co-chief executive of the company with Jim Balsillie until early last year when they were replaced in those posts by Thorsten Heins.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Telemarketing. CRTC asks for public input on rules governing automated calls

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is asking consumers and telemarketers for their views on how to reduce unwanted calls and is taking a close look at the rules for automated calls.

The CRTC is also asking for comment on a proposal by the Canadian Marketing Association to relax the rules restricting automatic calls for telemarketing.

The Canadian Marketing Association has proposed eliminating this restriction where an organization already has a business relationship with the party being called and has not made a request to be on the organization's internal do-not-call list, the CRTC said Wednesday.

The proposed change means that such calls would be allowed even if consumers have registered their numbers on the national do-not-call list, the CRTC noted. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Do-not-call list

- The CRTC oversees the national do-not-call list, which protects consumers from unwanted sales calls.

Points and perks

Starbucks expands loyalty program to grocery-store beans

Starbucks is offering a novel perk to get more people to sign up for its loyalty program: letting members earn points when they buy bags of its coffee at supermarkets. The company said at its annual meeting Wednesday that the new perk will roll out in May. The program will expand in the fall to other Starbucks products sold in supermarkets. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mobile payments

Rogers offers up more 'tap and pay' enabled phones

Rogers is offering seven more smartphones that allow consumers to do mobile payments at "tap and pay" terminals across the country. These BlackBerry and Android devices are enabled with a short-range wireless technology, called near field communications, that transfers data when the smartphone is tapped against a contactless terminals. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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IT'S PRIME TIME FOR TV

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

Sure, people are killing each other a lot these days, the economy always seems on the verge of collapsing, and the shrinking of chocolate bars continues unabated.

But you can't get me down, because this is the Golden Age of Television.

No other medium can compare. The Beatles came out with every style of pop music in the '60s, and musicians have been trying to catch up, copy or pay tribute ever since.

Movies peaked in the 1970s, when you could go watch The Godfather without being bombarded by tie-ins like a McBrando Triple Burger Combo complete with toy (Bullet-Riddled Sonny).

And the Internet, despite containing the total sum of human knowledge, hasn't figured out yet how to be more than society's porn stash.

But, ah, television. Television is in its sweet spot.

From masterpieces like The Wire and The Sopranos to epic works in progress like Game of Thrones and Mad Men, the last decade of television makes everything that came before it seem like Amateur 44 Minutes.

Just think: There was a time when people arguing the most complex character on television had to decide between Jed Clampett and Hoss Cartwright.

There was a time when the most impressive woman on television was Mary Tyler Moore because she had a job (!) and could throw that hat a lot higher than people believed possible with scrawny female arms.

There was a time when spoilers were only required for big summertime cliffhangers, like Who Borgified J.R.? It wasn't really required for, say, Home Improvement. ("This week, Tim Taylor (WARNING: SPOILER AHEAD) gets his wife mad at him and talks it out with Wilson. We'll discuss the repercussions of this shocker and what it means for the next 11 seasons.")

You can also see how far TV has come if you imagine current shows as old-style programs. "On a very special episode of Game of Thrones, Daenerys Stormborn has a heart-to-heart with her dragons when they take up smoking. King Joffrey enters a skateboarding competition, much to his mother's dismay. And Taylor Swift guest stars as Lady Diva Chanteuse, of House Brokenheart."

We can't even complain about bad television — and there's lots of it — because it's so easy to avoid now. Good TV is there for the buying, renting, streaming or downloading.

For the first time in its history, television has joined the best books and movies in rewarding an active mind. And we should grasp it while we can, because if popular culture has taught us anything, it's that the good stuff never lasts.

Whether this Golden Age of Television is a byproduct of our inability to deal with real-world wars, poverty and lack of chocolate on a planet that is spinning inexorably out of control is a question I will think about eventually — like, when Game of Thrones is over.

Shhh ... TV's on.

ZOOM

An artist within the animal

Works by four-legged, fin-footed and scaled creatures on display

Briana Velazquez and Christian Venegas look at footprints on canvas by the El Paso Zoo's elephants Tuesday inside the Asian Discovery Center.

Through Sunday, Texas' El Paso Zoo will be featuring the exhibit, called Color Coated, of paintings made by snakes, elephants, seals, meerkats and a few other creatures.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MARK LAMBIE/EL PASO TIMES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A piece of artwork done by Ibu, a Sumatran orangutan, seen at the El Paso Zoo. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

If you happen to be one who tweets
But shrug at the jokes that you read,
They're not all that shallow;
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And chuckles will soon flood your feed.

@TheLimerickKing:
What do progressives now think
On banning a sugary drink
These fools are a joke
For thinking a Coke
Is worthy of time in the clink.

@Twitmericks:
There is quite an old Argentinian
Who has a new global dominion
The pontifex Francis
Had previous chances
But now won the conclave's opinion.

I also like this pope-related one from @Twitmericks:
There was an old fellow in Rome
In a church with a bloody big dome
Who said that's enough
Of this papacy stuff
I'm going to veg out at home

Comments

RE: Lululemon Pulls Yoga Pants Off Shelves For Being Too Revealing, published March 19

These pants are made in Asia and sold here for arms and legs! I'll never ever buy these ... the fake ones make my tush look just as nice! We all know people don't buy them for yoga ... C'MON!
Too_Sense posted to metronews.ca

Any publicity is good publicity, this is nothing more than a stunt.
jordangreen posted to metronews.ca

Some people DO buy them for yoga. Not everyone is a poser. It is not that surprising that so many people pose as fitness buffs by wearing the clothes they wear. There are always knock-offs, and that's cool, but the reality is they were designed to do a job. It should be OK if the byproduct is that it is also sexy. Why is that such a problem? Isn't it up to the buyer if the clothes are too revealing or not?

Man, this is so messed up, I would be inclined to think it is at least in part publicity. Another "wardrobe malfunction" LOL.
Ron Davies posted to metronews.ca

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SEE WHAT'S NEW... CHECK OUT OUR LATEST OFFER ON PAGE 36 SHOPPERS DRUG MART

The Peptides get into character

Revenge of The Vinyl Café. Local group write a soundtrack to the literary work of CBC personality Stuart McLean

BACKSTAGE PASS
Samantha Everts
ottawa@metronews.ca

Ottawa's genre-defining nine-piece pop band The Peptides have written an album for CBC author and host Stuart McLean's book Revenge of the Vinyl Café. CONTRIBUTED

Ottawa pop band The Peptides are making literary and music history.

After receiving a request from CBC Radio's weekly variety program The Vinyl Café to write a new theme song last Spring, they were inspired to write a song for each short story in Stuart McLean's new book.

"Stuart had mentioned on the radio that this is the first soundtrack ever written for a book in Canadian history," said vocalist DeeDee Butters.

The album is aptly called Revenge of the Vinyl Café and features 18 tracks recorded in about six months.

"It came together really quickly," said Butters, who was not familiar with McLean's work beforehand.

"We've since become super fans," she said, adding that the beloved book recounting main characters' Dave and Morley's antics is now dog-eared from use.

The Peptides have applied their signature sassy and genre-defying style to the often hilarious tales. The opening title track wallops you with James Bond-esque grandiose-ness reflecting the sometimes larger than life characters, while others will have you chuckling.

The story of Dave getting stuck on a preprogrammed treadmill is perfectly captured in the poppy-dance song Treadmill Race.

"The album is really playful and possesses a lot of humour," said Butters. "Stuart loved it."

Unlike their 2010 album For Those Who Hate Human Interaction, this album was a very collaborative process for the band.

"Everyone has their hands in composing this time," Butters said.

Equally important to paying tribute to the nationally loved stories were the nine members' interpretations in songs which range from funk to soulful ballads. Butters said the most fun thing for her was embodying the moment of a character.

Getting Revenge

"I was excited to capture the spirit of those storytelling moments."
Peptides vocalist DeeDee Butters

"(You have to) put yourself in the framework in the character and make specific choices as a singer," said Butters.

If that's got you curious about what the new album sounds like you are in luck. The band will be performing at the Black Sheep Inn in Wakefield March 22 and 23.

You don't have to be "super fans" like Butters to enjoy the music though.

"If you've ever seen or enjoyed a musical or retro-show or cabaret you will love this show," she said.

Will a certain yarn-spinning CBC celebrity writer be in attendance at the show?

Butters said with a laugh, "A lady never tells."

Either way, this is a show not to be missed.

If you go...

- **Two performances.** Friday, March 22 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 23 at 2 p.m. at the Blacksheep Inn (753 Riverside Drive), $10. More info: thepeptides.com.

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Lily Tomlin. Actress was ready to bare it all in the name of feminism

Lily Tomlin says like her character in Admission, she's a feminist. HANDOUT

Admission is a romantic comedy, not an action movie, so it comes as something of a surprise that one of its stars wanted to advertise their physique with a scene in which they chop wood bare-chested in the forest. Even more surprising? That star was comedy legend Lily Tomlin. "I wanted to be in the woods chopping wood with my shirt off," Tomlin reveals about her character, a septuagenarian feminist whose adult life has been devoted to activism. "The character has a double mastectomy, and I think, I'll get a breastplate made like I've had a double mastectomy and I'll tattoo it to show another expression of her empowerment and how she's completely at ease with herself and accepts her female body."

Unfortunately, the actress landed the role too late to be able to follow through on her plan. But even without the requisite hardware she wanted to bare her body on screen, she reached into her own experiences in order to bare her character's soul. "I am a feminist and I lived in those days of the movement," Tomlin explains. "And I know what it is as a human [to believe] in a certain philosophy or some doctrine — and you do not want to betray it."

As Susannah, Tomlin plays the mother of Tina Fey's Princeton admissions officer, Portia, who's fumbling her way through a romance with an alternative high school principal (Paul Rudd) while simultaneously dealing with the revelation that an applicant just might be her long-lost son. The 73-year-old actress says that she loved the parallels she saw between mother and daughter, particularly since like her daughter's long-concealed pregnancy, Susannah had Portia under dubious circumstances that she has since re-imagined as an emblem of her feminist values. "My character got pregnant from having sex with a guy she's attracted to on the train, but she doesn't want to admit that she was so attracted to this guy that she was vulnerable to him," Tomlin observes. "So she creates that mythology that she chose him and she was empowered enough to decide when she was going to have a child and who she was going to have it with."

NED EHRBAR, MWN

Punny movie

Lily Tomlin liked that the film possessed so many layers while still managing to deliver on a visceral level. "Aside from the feminist aspect, it's just a human story about people not being their authentic selves," she says. "Every one of us was living some kind of inauthenticity. "The metaphor of admission, in the course of the movie we all have an admission," she says, punctuating the film's title. "I love the slug line — 'let someone in.'"

Fey has an admission to make about school

Princeton pass over. Filming latest project brought up memories of rejection for comedian and writer

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Playing a gatekeeper deciding who does and doesn't get into Princeton in Admission brought some long-buried memories to the surface for Tina Fey. "It did remind me that I had actually applied to Princeton and had been rejected, but I felt OK about that," says Fey, who earned her bachelor's at the University of Virginia. "I didn't get mad when I was shooting on the Princeton campus. It was fine."

In fact, Fey credits her Pennsylvania upbringing for sparing her from much of the Ivy League anxiety forced upon other teenagers. "I wasn't growing up in some kind of private-school world where it was expected of you to try to get into an Ivy League school," she says. "I think there are people who grow up in a family where it's like, 'If you don't get into Harvard or Yale or Princeton, you're done!' I think that's craziness."

Though she made a name for creating her own characters — most notably Liz Lemon on 30 Rock, Fey came to Admission primarily as an actress. "I thought the character of Portia was interesting because I hadn't seen a movie about this world of college admissions before, and it is a world that's filled with so much anxiety and therefore humour for people on all sides of it," she says of her attraction to the project.

"I also liked that she's an adult and she is intelligent, and at the same time she still has this huge, explosive emotional thing happen in her life. I also thought it was an interesting story that you see these characters who are chasing motherhood and in pursuit of motherhood, and this is a character who decidedly did not want to be a mother but because of the given circumstances has to cope with the idea that maybe she is."

As for being a mother herself? "I'm in favour of it," Fey declares with a laugh. "I'm a mother of two, and it's certainly probably the hardest — parenthood, motherhood or fatherhood — is probably the hardest job you could ever do, but it is rewarding in a unique way as well."

Tina Fey and Paul Rudd star in Admission, which opens Friday. HANDOUT

Quoted

"I wasn't growing up in some kind of private-school world where it was expected of you to try to get into an Ivy League School

Tina Fey on her own experiences with applying to universities, and Princeton in particular.

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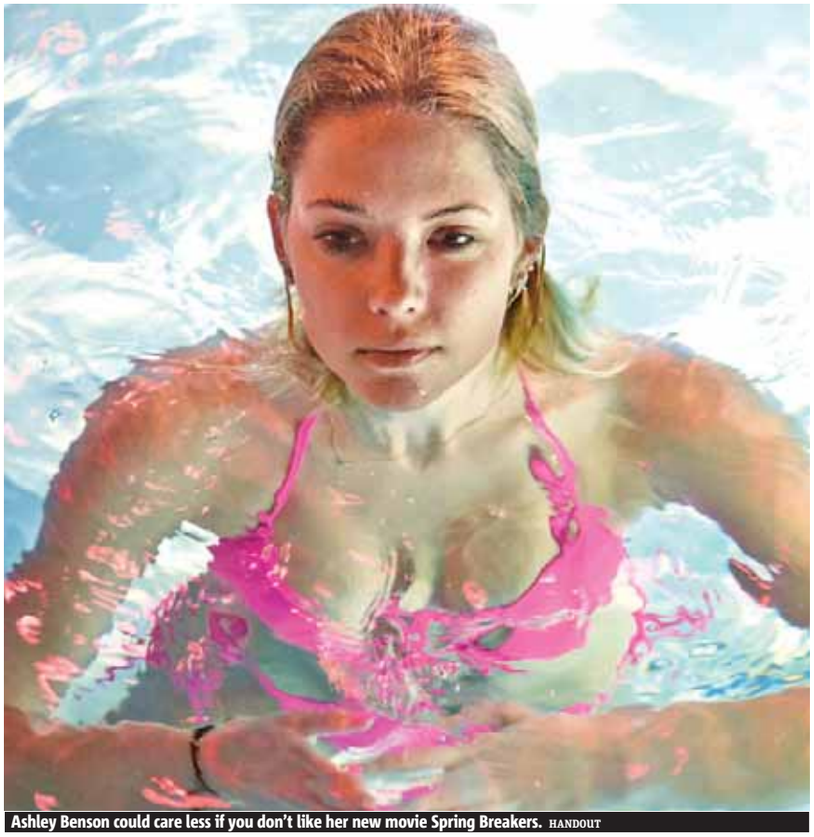

Ashley Benson could care less if you don't like her new movie Spring Breakers. HANDOUT

Hate Spring Breakers? Movie star doesn't care

Interview. Ashley Benson unfazed by backlash to Disney stars kicking it up a notch in party flick

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

Ashley Benson, the Pretty Little Liars star, makes the jump to film in the most attention-grabbing way she can: alongside Selena Gomez and Vanessa Hudgens as coeds gone bad in Harmony Korine's Spring Breakers.

The film finds the girls' characters knocking over a diner to fund a wild week in Florida, ending up in jail and bedding down with a crazed, gun-toting, drug-slinging amateur rapper named Alien (James Franco).

And you know what? Benson likes that you may hate this movie.

There's a lot of noise surrounding it, about the content and the Disney backgrounds of your co-stars. When you're at the centre of this kind of storm, how do you deal with it?

I don't really listen to it. Harmony just wanted people to be left with a feeling, and if they're horrified, that's amazing, if they loved it, that's even better.

So I like when people hate the movie because it's like, wow we really affected you and you're really disturbed, and that's great.

"Just pretend it's a video game" stands out as a particularly telling line of dialogue.

Well, that wasn't actually in the script.

The script was more descriptive and very visual, very little dialogue.

(Korine) said to pick out three scenes from the movie (for the audition), and each scene maybe had two lines.

It was more of just visually what people looked like, what the girls were wearing, that they would dance, that they would play with guns, that they would have this love scene with Alien.

And that's what made the movie so brilliant, because half the things were made up on the spot two minutes before we shot or it was improvised.

This is a great way to start a film career. Where do you go from here, movie-wise?

I think I want to do another one like this. I want to work with a director who's kind of like Harmony.

Lauper just wants to have fun as composer

Writing her first musical turned into a time machine for Cyndi Lauper.

As the Grammy Award winner began work on the exuberant Kinky Boots, it took her back to her childhood, where she was likely to be found listening endlessly to cast albums on a record player.

There was There's No Business Like Show Business and My Fair Lady.

And South Pacific, of course.

She remembers her grandmother coming downstairs and ripping The King and I off the player after one too many spins.

"My mother said I was a little odd as a kid," says Lauper, 59.

"I was alone a lot but I didn't feel alone. When I sang with those records, I'd be Julie Andrews and there was Rex Harrison sitting on my mother's bed. I was Mitzi Gaynor. I was Ezio Pinza. I think she had Mary Martin, too — I was all of them. I was pretty good until they sang duets."

Cyndi Lauper has written her first musical, Kinky Boots. GETTY IMAGES

Sitting backstage at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre, waiting to catch another preview of her 15-song debut as a Broadway lyricist and composer, Lauper is both nervous and humble.

The little girl who listened compulsively to show tunes has now delivered her own.

"It's the closest thing to being five," she says.

Kinky Boots, which opens April 4, is based on an obscure 2005 British film about a British shoe factory on the brink of ruin that retrofits itself into a maker of fetishistic footwear for drag queens.

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David Bowie brings music to the movies

Contribution to cinema. The enigmatic musician has only had a few leading roles, but his CV is teeming with small, memorable supporting turns

MATT PRIGGE
Metro World News in New York

Movies have been kind to David Bowie. Where the tradition is for cinema to crush pop star hubris — just ask Madonna, Britney Spears and Mariah Carey — the one born David Jones has eked out a select but excellent filmic existence.

He's only had but a few leading roles — most notably 1976's The Man Who Fell to Earth — but his CV teems with small, memorable supporting turns: a cucumber-cool Pontius Pilate in The Last Temptation of Christ, a spot-on Andy Warhol in Basquiat, a movie-stealing Nikola Tesla in The Prestige and a deeply affecting performance as a dying vampire in the incoherent hot mess that is Tony Scott's The Hunger. (He's also very good as a co-lead in Nagisa Oshima's Japanese POW saga, Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence.)

It's too bad Bowie doesn't enjoy film acting. He's admitted finding movie sets to be artistically fallow, consisting of so much waiting around that he finds himself uninspired. (He hasn't acted in a film since a small role in 2008's August.)

But movies have also been great to his music. Yes, there are only about a thousand uses of Under Pressure. But other movies use his music in more creative ways.

In honour of The Next Day, Bowie's first album in more than a decade — and his best in ages — here's a smattering of Bowie's aural contributions to cinema.

David Bowie isn't a fan of acting. GETTY IMAGES / ALL OTHER PHOTOS ARE HANDOUTS

Christiane F (1981)

Christiane F (Vera Christine Felscherinow) achieved fame when her life as a teenage heroin addict in West Germany became the non-fiction bestseller Christiane F — We Children of Bahnhof Zoo.

It then became a low-budget movie by Ulli Edel (Last Exit to Brooklyn, The Baader Meinhof Complex). A depressing film about teenage drug addiction might not have been a big draw, but it had an ace up its sleeve: David Bowie contributed songs and appeared as himself in gratuitous concert footage.

Because the film was set in the late '70s, the music hails from his Berlin Er a and you get Helden, the German version of Heroes. Today the film is perhaps best known as a soundtrack in the David Bowie section of music stores.

Cat People (1982)

Paul Schrader's remake of Val Lewton's no-budget chiller about a woman who thinks she'll turn into a killer panther when sexually aroused is heavy and awesomely insane.

It saves its most poetically ridiculous moment for the end, which employs the slower, moodier version of Bowie's Cat People — also used to great effect in Inglourious Basterds — over a freeze frame of a sad panther face.

This holds for an entire verse before Schrader unpauses it for the song's chorus, then freeze frames it again!

Labyrinth (1985)

The movie where Bowie, made up to look like a leopard in big '80s hair, plays a puppet king who wishes to marry a 15-year-old Jennifer Connelly. When she refuses, he does the next logical thing: kidnaps her baby brother and forces her to trawl through a puppet-laden maze. It's also a part-time musical. Screenplay by Terry Jones!

Boy Meets Girl (1984)

Filmmaker Leos Carax is big again thanks to Holy Motors, but once upon a time he was the enfant terrible of French cinema and one of the major practitioners of the music video-heavy "cinema du look."

In his feature debut, Carax went to some of Bowie's earliest, when he was an incorrigible unknown cranking out whimsical Anthony Newley-esque songs. The result, a sequence set to the languid When I Live My Dream, is a lovely, lyrical moment capturing the pleasure of walking around Paris with Bowie booming in one's ears.

Lost Highway (1997)

Bowie's 1995 album Outside is one of his better latter-day works, and two of its songs were put to excellent use in two excellent movies.

Seven got Heart's Filthy Lesson, while David Lynch's comeback film — after the disastrous and unfairly maligned Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me, which featured a bizarre cameo from Bowie — opened with the (literally) driving I'm Deranged.

The Runaways (2010)

Dakota Fanning's Cherie Currie first exhibits her rock star prowess by lip synching and gyrating to Lady Grinning Soul while decked out in Aladdin Sane gear. That doesn't sound amazing when typed out, but it is.

Mauvais Sang (1986)

Carax reached for his Bowie stack again for his sophomore effort — an arty neo-noir in which philosophical crook Denis Lavant (the shape-shifting star of Holy Motors) is in love with moll Juliette Binoche.

His passions manifest in a scene where, upon hearing Bowie's Modern Love on the radio, he runs top speed down a deserted city street at night, the song booming at 11. It's the most accurate portrayal of unbridled happiness caught on film and, like most moments of unbridled happiness, it's much too short.

Dogville (2004)

Lars Von Trier's twisted homage to Our Town aims to be an indictment of America, in which strangers are first welcomed and then exploited by a cruel society.

To drive this point home, he ends the film with a montage of photos of American devastation and blight set to Young Americans.

Von Trier did the same thing with the sequel, Manderlay, which concerned slavery and racism.

The Perks of Being a Wallflower (2012)

Once upon a time, when you heard a song and you didn't know what it was, you might spend years, decades even, trying to hunt it down.

Set in the distant past of the early '90s, this much-liked YA picture handily depicts an era of irritating ignorance: our heroes hear Bowie's Heroes — the Wallflowers cover, from the soundtrack to 1998's Godzilla, had not yet emerged — are immediately blown away (because it's Bowie's Heroes), but don't figure out what it is until much later in the movie. Good times.

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NBC hopes for new life this spring

Ratings race. After a chilly winter, network looks to a new series that treads some edgy territory

Can Hannibal and Revolution signal spring for NBC?

What a bleak winter it's been for broadcast networks and their new scripted shows!

While the jury is out for CBS's Golden Boy, ABC's Zero Hour was a zero and Red Widow, based on early ratings, seems as doomed as its gunned-down mobster hubby.

And then there's NBC, whose Do No Harm, a multiple-identity crime drama, was identified after just two airings as a flop.

But that isn't the only harm done to NBC. Its midseason comedy 1600 Penn is limping, as is its midseason whodunit, Deception. In January, Broadway melodrama Smash returned for a second season to such dismal ratings it's since been banished as a lost cause to Saturday night.

It wasn't supposed to go like this.

Last fall, downtrodden NBC entered the new season with brave but only modest aspirations. Then, juiced on audience-grabber Sunday Night Football and further boosted by robust singing competition The Voice, the network vaulted to front-runner status, winning 13 of the season's first 15 weeks.

Can J.J. Abrams' Revolution (pictured here) or the upcoming Hannibal catch NBC's freefall in the ratings? HANDOUT

With full recognition that football goes away each January, NBC's bosses prayed that the network's unanticipated surge, plus positive reception for its upcoming new shows, might propel it across the wintry void.

But NBC has been left out in the cold. While CBS reclaimed its customary lead, NBC last month brought up the rear not only behind customary rivals ABC and Fox, but also, for the first time in history, the Spanish-language Univision.

Now, in the next few days, NBC will confront two indicators of how soon, if ever, it can hope to regain life.

On Monday, the network brings back its sci-fi drama Revolution, an apocalyptic lights-out thriller produced by fan favourite J.J. Abrams. In NBC's heady days last autumn, Revolution emerged as a budding hit. But in November, it took a midseason break.

Will viewers come back for it now? Can Revolution reclaim its hit status on a diminished NBC, however buoyed by the return of The Voice as its lead-in?

Little more than a week later, a new series could prove to be an even more revealing acid test of NBC's prospects. Premiering on April 4, Hannibal must almost be the first broadcast series whose hero is a foodie with a special taste for human body parts.

One hopeful sign for NBC: as a grisly crime show with a psychiatrist-turned-serial-killer (played by Mads Mikkelson) and an FBI profiler (Hugh Dancy) chasing him and his imitators, Hannibal bears more than a passing resemblance to Fox's The Following, which stars Kevin Bacon as a former FBI agent chasing a serial killer (James Purefoy) and his network of disciples.

The signs are clear that broadcast networks are moving into edgier territory, upping the ante to win audience support.

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A writer looks at 40

Middle-aged musing. Judd Apatow and wife Leslie Mann reflect on their milestone birthday

Comedy maven Judd Apatow distinctly remembers the day he reached the milestone birthday that shapes his film This is 40, which comes out on DVD/Blu-ray on Friday.

"The day I turned 40 my wife was shooting a movie with Zac Efron, so I visited her on the set and she was dancing with him in a scene," the 45-year-old writer/producer/director, who's married to This is 40 star Leslie Mann, said in a recent telephone interview.

"So I had to watch her dance with Zac Efron all night. That may have scarred me."

Mann has a different take on the experience.

"That was fun!" the comedic actress said with a laugh in a separate telephone interview.

As it turned out, sultry dancing was also a key part of Mann's 40th birthday nearly a year ago.

"I went to Hawaii with my girlfriends and we went to a night club and we danced on a stripper pole, with our clothes on, but the night club was empty," Mann recalled on the line from Los Angeles.

"It was like a Wednesday night or something and ... we had a lot to drink.

"And the next day we were covered in bruises from the pole, because you have to be in really good shape to go on those poles. I mean, it takes a lot of core strength, which we don't have," she continued.

"But we had a good time, and you know (40), has been pretty good. I seem pretty OK with it. Thirty was harder for me than 40."

Apatow feels the same way.

"I found 30 to be a trickier birthday, because I always felt like you were supposed to go nuts when you're in your 20s and I didn't. I just worked really hard as a writer and I didn't take the time to have a lot of mad fun," said the New York native, who did standup comedy before moving on to an acclaimed TV and film career.

"So when my 20s ended I thought, 'Oh my god, I missed it. I didn't do what you're supposed to do.' Then I just resigned myself to it being over."

Mann's character in This is 40, meanwhile, is not OK with leaving her 30s and lies about her age. Paul Rudd plays her husband, who is entering his 40th year with financial woes at his record label.

Apatow wrote and directed the dramedy that co-stars his and Mann's children, Maude and Iris, as the family's daughters.

The story is "a big soup of real experiences" and reflects his fascination with why people struggle to get along, he said.

"The basic idea of trying really hard to make a marriage work over the long-term is interesting to me and I am fascinated by bad communication skills," said Apatow, who made his feature directorial debut with The 40-Year-Old Virgin, which he also co-wrote.

This is 40 is billed "a sort-of sequel" to Apatow's hit 2007 comedy film Knocked Up, which also featured Mann, Maude and Iris.

The family also worked together on Apatow's 2009 feature Funny People, but that doesn't mean Maude and Iris are pursuing careers in show business.

"I'm hoping it blossoms naturally, but I'm not sending them out on auditions or anything," said Apatow, noting they want the two "to be normal kids with no pressure to seek employment."

"The last thing I want is for them to be stuck in Croatia with James Cameron on a seven-month shoot. I'd rather they stay home and be healthy and watch The Bachelor with dad."

Mann said working with the whole family on This is 40 was tough at times but it was also "the greatest experience ever."

"I think it's so fun to be able to do a project together as a family and to be able to sit down together at the dinner table and have creative conversations about what we're going to do at work the next day. Like, who gets to do that?" she said.

"People just don't get to do that, so I feel very lucky that we got to do that a bunch of times together. So it's a positive experience, definitely, with some bad days."

Apatow isn't sure if the whole family will do another film together.

"I don't have any plans to do anything at this point. I'm just reading and hoping something pops into my mind at some point."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

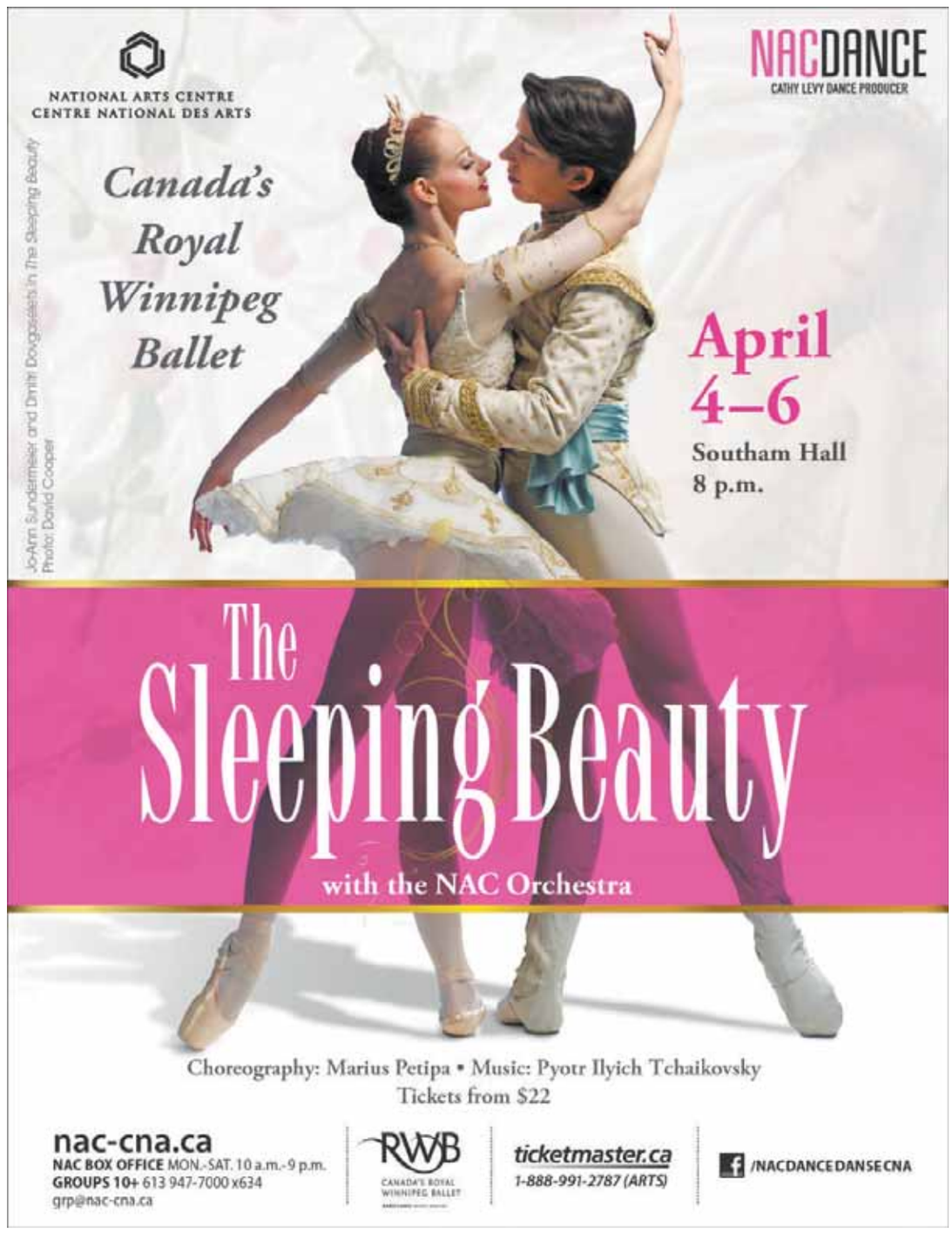
"The basic idea of trying really hard to make a marriage work over the long term is interesting to me and I am fascinated by bad communication skills"

Judd Apatow on writing his comedy This is 40

Judd Apatow and Leslie Mann both accepted turning 40. GETTY IMAGES

Apatow on relationships

- **Communication.** "When people know how to say the right thing but they get so caught up in their own ego that they say the wrong thing. That always makes me laugh, people who get off the rails, because ultimately we want everyone to take care of us and it's hard to make it about the other person."



METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Naomi Watts. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Naomi Watts digs deep with words on plastic surgery

Naomi Watts isn't ruling out plastic surgery as an option, but she does worry it might limit her job prospects.

"Never say never — and I certainly don't judge anyone who does it — but most of the characters I play are going through some kind of emotional turmoil, so my job requires me to have expression," Watts tells Australia's Good Health magazine. "If my face was frozen, what right do I have to play that part? All the women who haven't (done) anything to their faces are still able to play great roles. And some of the ones who have done something have messed it up — they look freakish. Anyway, for me it's about playing women with rich lives. And the longer the life, the deeper the wrinkles."

The Word

James Franco couldn't care less if you don't like what he does

James Franco has caught flak for his myriad film and art projects he's launched and academic degrees he's pursued, but he's not letting the haters get him down.

"Criticism can sting but not for long. At this point I've heard it all, good and bad. I can take anything," Franco tells Bullett magazine. "If anyone wants to say that my doing these things makes me a jerk, that's not about me — that's about people reacting to me. I don't need to be liked for anything I do."

He continued on about his haters and why they react the way they do.

"I put out a lot of different kinds of material, and maybe people read that as egotistical. Or maybe, since a lot of it does involve some aspect of me, they find it self-aggrandizing. But there's a long tradition of artists using themselves."

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About to watch Wayne's World. For the first time...

@MARLONLWAYANS
You don't have to figure life out... It has its way of figuring itself out

@SethMacFarlane
In pre-production for A Million Ways To Die in the West. My horse hasn't kicked me yet, but he did say he hates Family Guy past season 3.

Pink cares about all her fans, no matter how young.

Pink stops show to help little girl

Pink certainly knows how to keep the peace. The singer halted a recent Philadelphia concert when she noticed a little girl in the crowd crying, according to Us Weekly.

"Is everything OK right? Is this little girl all right? Why is she crying? Why is she upset?" asked Pink, who was informed by audience members that an altercation had upset the young girl. "Because there was a fight? You all are fighting around a little girl?" she asked.

Pink then coaxed the girl on stage and gave her a treat.

"Honey, do you want this frog and this Rice Krispies treat?"

Before getting back to the music, she also had a message for the rest of the crowd.

"Are we OK now? Cut it out, y'all. We're grown-ass women."

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Fall into fashion's future

After four gruelling fashion weeks — New York, London, Milan and Paris — we distilled the biggest themes that came down the runways. Here's what you can expect to wear next autumn.

TINA CHADHA
Metro World News

Back to black

As far as New York goes, one message was clear: fall is going to be all about wearable clothes. And let's face it, nothing in your wardrobe is more versatile than black. It's no surprise then that the classic shade ruled the runways. Pair black items with white for another key trend.

SEEN HERE: RAG & BONE

Plays on texture

Forget clothes in plain wool or cotton — designers used luxurious textured fabrics such as high-shine pony hair, wooly alpaca, sophisticated tweed and quilted leather to add a layer of interest to their fall looks.

SEEN HERE: LANVIN

Menswear inspired

Borrowing from the boys has been popular for the past few seasons. Designers furthered explored the trend for fall with slouchy, loose suiting.

SEEN HERE: BLUMARINE

Oversized coats

Besides the tremendous amount of fur on the runway (is PETA still doing their job?) there was another overwhelmingly ubiquitous outerwear trend: coats in oversized proportions and exaggerated cocoon shapes. Squeezing into a crowded subway in one of these is going to be fun.

SEEN HERE: ROCHAS

Pink gets its day

The colour pink gets a bad rap as an uncool girly-girl shade — but that's about to change. Come fall, expect to see stand-out items in every permutation of pink ranging from soft blush to bold fuchsia.

SEEN HERE: DKNY

There's a lady in the house

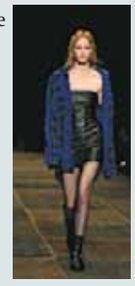
For those of you who don't do androgyny, feminine staples such as peplum tops, full skirts with longer hemlines and pencil skirts with cinched jackets gave collections a polished, lady-like feel.

SEEN HERE: ROCHAS

ALL PHOUTOS GETTY IMAGES

Plaid and checks

Whether you go '90s grunge a la Saint Laurent or the more formal route with houndstooth and Prince of Wales check as shown at Tommy Hilfiger, expect to be part of the plaid parade come Fall.



SEEN HERE: SAINT LAURENT

Winter white

People anxious about getting side eyes for wearing white in the cold seasons can finally put that fear to rest. Designers showed full looks in dreamy pale shades.

SEEN HERE: GIAMBATTISTA VALLI

High slits

Are all the safe, wearable clothes putting you to sleep? Skirts and dresses with slits up to there added a sexy jolt to the fall shows.

SEEN HERE: GIVENCHY

Embellishments galore

This never really ever went out of style. But this show season, the decoration was especially in-your-face with shimmer on top of crystal on top of metal on top of feathers. No matter what your trimming of choice is, there was an option to choose from on the runway.

SEEN HERE: BURBERRY

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Live on the curly pasta edge with Sicilian-inspired Lamb Ragu

This is one of Nigella Lawson's go-to weeknight suppers. She says you can cook the ragu longer at a lower heat, if desired, but it's also perfect as is.

This recipe calls for pappardelle — those egg-rich, wide ribbons — but you can use whatever type of pasta you have on hand.

"Ragout" is French, "ragu" Italian, and this meat sauce is inspired by the Sicilian combination of sweet lamb, dried wild mint and crushed chili flakes, though Lawson said she has added an Anglo note with a little red currant jelly.

Ingredients

- 22 ml (1 1/2 tbsp) garlic-infused olive oil
- 1 banana shallot, chopped
- 5 ml (1 tsp) dried mint
- 5 ml (1 tsp) oregano
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) crushed red pepper flakes
- 250 g (8 oz) ground lamb
- 1 can (398 ml/14 oz) diced tomatoes
- 10 ml (2 tsp) red currant jelly
- 7 ml (1 1/2 tsp) Worcestershire sauce
- Pinch salt, plus more for pasta water
- Freshly ground pepper
- 250 g (8 oz) pappardelle
- Handful fresh mint, to garnish (optional)

1. Put a large pan of water on to boil for the pasta and warm garlic oil in a small, heavy-based pan that comes with a lid; cook shallots, stirring for a minute or so.

2. Sprinkle in mint, oregano and red pepper flakes, stirring again in hot pan before adding meat. Cook for a couple of minutes, stirring to break it up with a wooden spatula or spoon, until it loses a bit of its pinkness.

3. Add tomatoes, red currant jelly, Worcestershire sauce, salt and some grindings of pepper, then give a good stir and bring to a bubble. Partially cover with the lid and simmer for 20 minutes.

4. At the appropriate time, salt the boiling water and cook pasta according to package instructions, making sure to check for readiness a couple of minutes before it's supposed to be done. Once cooked and not-too-efficiently drained, return pasta to pan and dress with lamb ragu.

5. Sprinkle a little bit of fresh mint onto each bowl, if desired, to serve. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ NIGELLISSIMA: EASY ITALIAN-INSPIRED RECIPES BY NIGELLA LAWSON (KNOPF CANADA, 2013).

Curly-Edged Pasta With Lamb Ragu

This recipe serves two. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cookbook of the Week

Flavours of Italy

In her book Nigellissima: Easy Italian-Inspired Recipes, Nigella Lawson offers up dishes that don't require inaccessible ingredients or techniques. That's because Nigellissima shows readers how a weeknight dish can be a faithful (and delicious) interpretation of traditional Italian fares.

Included are recipes like Italian Roast Chicken with Peppers and Olives; Shortcut Sausage Meatballs; Spaghetti with Tuna, Lemon and Arugula; Nutella Cheesecake, and more. METRO

Indulge without dairy and gluten: Choco-Olive Oil Cake

Nigella Lawson said she made this cake for a friend who had been diagnosed with celiac disease.

It's also dairy and gluten-free. It's "very, very easy."

The cake is delicious served warm, with some berries on the side, as well as a dollop of mascarpone or ice cream. It can also be served cool.

Ingredients

- 150 ml (2/3 cup) regular olive oil (plus more for greasing)
- 90 ml (6 tbsp) good-quality unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) boiling water
- 10 ml (2 tsp) best vanilla extract
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) almond meal (flour) or 175 ml (3/4 cup) plus 15 ml (1 tbsp) all-purpose flour
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) baking soda
- Pinch salt
- 250 ml (1 cup) superfine sugar
- 3 eggs

1. Heat oven to 160 C (325 F). Grease a 23-cm (9-inch) springform pan with oil and line base with baking parchment.

2. Measure and sift cocoa powder into bowl and whisk in boiling water until you have a smooth, chocolatey, still runny paste. Whisk in vanilla, then set aside to cool a little.

3. In another smallish bowl, combine almond meal with baking soda and salt.

4. Put sugar, olive oil and eggs into bowl of freestanding mixer with paddle attachment and beat vigorously 3 minutes until you have a pale-primrose, aerated and thickened cream.

5. Turn speed down a little and pour in cocoa mix, beating as you go, and when all is scraped in, you can slowly tip in almond meal mixture.

6. Scrape down, and stir with a spatula, then pour batter into prepared pan. Bake 45 minutes or until sides set and very centre, on top, still looks slightly damp. A cake tester should come up mainly clean but with a few sticky chocolate crumbs clinging to it.

7. Let cool 10 minutes on a wire rack, still in its pan, and then ease sides of the cake with metal spatula and spring it out of the pan.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPECIAL INFORMATION FEATURE

Flower Station. Fabulous farm fresh Feta most versatile of cheeses

CURD ON THE STREET
Vanessa Simmons
For Metro

My longing for spring to hurry up and arrive inspires this week's cheese pick. I dream of radiant sunshine, colourful tulips and daffodils, picnics, fresh local produce, farmers' markets, and Feta. One of the most versatile of cheeses, it gives an added zing to spring and summer dishes; think salads, pizzas, burgers, wraps.

Sticking to tried and true traditional cheese-making, Jeff and Jenna Fenwick, the new owners of Back Forty Artisan Cheese are carrying on the spirit of old world methods using 100 per cent raw ewe's milk in the production of their hand-lovingly crafted, small batch artisan cheeses.

Cheese: Flower Station

PRODUCER: Back Forty Artisan Cheese, Lanark County, Ontario

FACT: Feta falls into the fresh, un-ripened cheese category, which are cheeses that receive minimal or no aging. It has a longer shelf life when persevered in it's own brine.

Flower Station, one of the little known Back Forty Artisan Cheeses is a fresh, unripened, semi-firm, Mediterranean-style raw sheep's milk feta. Stored in it's own whey, you'll find slightly crumbly texture with mild citrus flavour combined with a good balance of salt and fresh milk flavors from these little ivory wedges.

Spring is in the air and as the weather warms up you'll see them soon at the Carp Farmer's Market.

Find their other popular cheeses Madawaska, Highland Blue & Bonnechere on the board at local restaurants, Foodsmith's in Perth, the Piggy Market and Serious Cheese, while available.

Flower Station. VANESSA SIMMONS/FOR METRO

The delightfully light and fresh Tuna Tataki is amongst the creative Japanese-fusion dishes and swanky atmosphere that make Izakaya the perfect romantic date spot on Elgin Street. SAMANTHA EVERTS/FOR METRO

Enjoy Japanese fusion-food

SAMANTHA EVERTS
For Metro

By definition, Izakayas are Japanese drinking establishments to relax with some sake or beer and enjoy a few bites. Located in the former Big Daddy's Crab Shack, Ottawa's upscale version is serving up high-end Japanese fusion-food in the large, tastefully decorated Asian-inspired room. With a DJ spinning, tall tables with real linen and private booths make it perfect for settling in for the night however was half-empty on our visit.

We ordered the warmed house sake and fresh parmesan sprinkled edamame to snack on but unfortunately it didn't arrive until we were done our other small plates.

We started with the generously portioned house slaw which had Thai-influence with zingy peanut sauce but instead got kick from bits of pungent kimchi mixed with crunchy cabbage and apple.

There was remarkable elegance and care in the beautiful presentation of each dish. The thin wonton crisps that adorned the salad were tossed and served at our table on top by a waiter whose attentiveness took our dining experience to the next level.

The tuna tataki was perfectly seared, thinly sliced, with spring herbs and cucumber shavings and hints of chili oil to enhance the fresh fish flavour.

Alongside this were our pan-fried dumplings, which turned a traditional Asian dumpling to Indian hybrid stuffed with paneer cheese, sweet potatoes, peas and spinach served on a mild tamarind sauce.

This sort of fusion cuisine is what is to be expected at Izakaya.

In the cool atmosphere we could have stayed longer, but for the expensive dishes, we had to bid sayonara. 339 Elgin St. - izakayaonelgin.com

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Bringing a tiny space into the future

This 1970's condo kitchen is ready to be brought into more modern times. PROVIDED

The tiny five-by-eight foot kitchen in my 1970's condo is in desperate need of an update, but the space is tiny! I'm hoping you can offer some suggestions to make it look modern and larger.
-Sylvia G, via email

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

The redeeming feature of your kitchen is the large window that lets in lots of light, so no matter how small your kitchen area might be it will never look dark.

Here are a few design tips and products that will help modernize your kitchen.

Keep the major elements, such as your stove, fridge and sink in the same areas and consider replacing/upgrading what you have now. That way you will not have to worry about complicated electrical or plumbing issues. I would flip the fridge and stove (simple electrical changes); that way, when you look into the kitchen the stove will offer you more visual depth into the room, making it look larger.

Appliances

Choose a 24-inch-wide fridge with a reflective stainless finish. The narrow fridges today come much taller and are counter depth for a fitted look. I would suggest replacing the stove with a two-burner counter cook top, then build in a micro-convection oven below. This will free up more counter space.

Cupboards

Since your kitchen is small but bright, I suggest a glossy door in a light colour. The glossy finish will reflect light and keep the small area bright. Consider adding a set of glass-fronted cabinet doors on the cupboards above the sink to add a break in the long row of cabinets and allow an attractive area for display.

Countertops

A stone countertop will give you two things: a high-end look for your kitchen and durability. I suggest choosing a countertop colour that blends the colours of your fridge/stove together. For instance, if you choose black appliances then choose a darker countertop. For stainless appliances, go for medium greyish tones and for white appliances go with light counters.

Backsplash and flooring

Your backsplash should marry your upper and lower cabinets together with its tone/colour. For instance, if you have white cabinetry then choose a white backsplash. For a room-expanding effect consider a mirrored backsplash. I like the grey/smoke mirror for a dramatic effect. This tends to look best when incorporating darker cupboards and counters into a kitchen. Your flooring should be a durable, non-gloss tile in a colour/tone that matches the new appliances you choose.

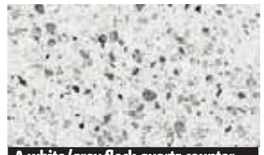
Lighting

Investing in under-cupboard lighting will add drama at night and allow you to use the kitchen without turning on the bright overhead light. Add a low-profile track light in a modern look to keep the overhead light fixture tight to the ceiling, this will make your ceilings appear taller.

Paint colour

If you want to make the room look large, make sure the gloss and paint on the walls match the cabinets. If you're dealing with a lighter tone, then paint the ceiling the same colour for consistency.

A tall, slim fridge with a stainless look can give a modern style even when only 24 inches wide. LG.COM


A white/grey fleck quartz counter adds a touch of luxury and durability. CAMBRIACANADA.COM

A small cooktop frees up counter space in a tiny kitchen. GEAPPLIANCES.CA

White glossy cabinetry helps to reflect light and keep a kitchen modern in its look. IKEA.COM

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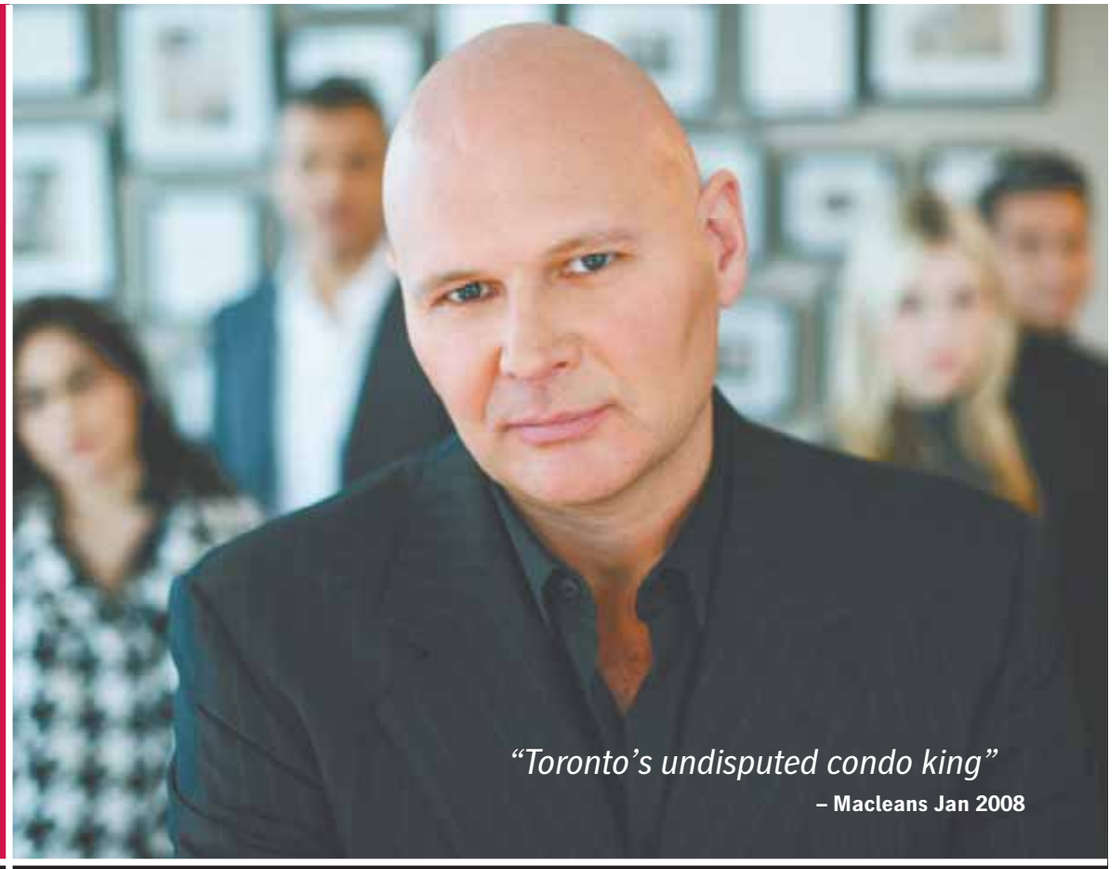

Well known real estate broker and developer
— Modern Ottawa, September 2012

Brad Lamb is leading the charge of eastern developers to Calgary
— Calgary Sun, September 2012

Brad Lamb is a force to be reckoned with in the condo world
— Toronto Star, April, 2012

Toronto developer and mega condominium broker
— Gay Calgary May 2012

Toronto real estate mogul
— CBC News, March, 2012

Brad Lamb is the master of buzz when it comes to selling stylish downtown condos
— Ottawa Citizen, November 2011

Brad Lamb: the condo king
— The Grid TO, August, 2011

...Toronto's 'Condo King' Brad Lamb, name sake of the HGTV series 'Big City Broker'... investing in Ottawa for the long term
— Ottawa Sun, June 2011

...HGTV star and condo pitchman Brad Lamb...
— Winnipeg Free Press May 2011

His name has become synonymous with condominiums
— National Post, March, 2010

Known in this city as the King of Condos
— 24 Hours Toronto, 2009

The real estate super salesman who personified the condominium boom in downtown Toronto over the past decade
— The Globe and Mail, Report on Business, Feb, 2009

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— Macleans, Jan 2008

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HOW A LANDLORD CAN EVICT A TENANT

In most situations, before a landlord can apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board to evict the tenant, they must first give the tenant a Notice of Termination that tells the tenant what the problem is. For some termination notices, the landlord must wait a specific number of days to see if the tenant corrects the problem before they can file the application with the Board. The number of days the tenant has to correct the problem is set out in the notice. If the tenant does not correct the problem and/or does not move out, the landlord can file an application with the Board and in most situations a hearing will be scheduled.

At the hearing, the parties can appear in front of a member of the Board. The member will listen to what each person has to say and then make a decision.

If an eviction order is issued, it tells the tenant when they must be out of the unit. If they do not move out, then the landlord can file this order with the Court Enforcement Office. Only the Sheriff can evict a tenant who does not leave a unit as directed by an eviction order issued by the Board.

A tenant can be evicted without a hearing. For some types of applications an ex parte order can be issued without holding a hearing.

A tenant can be evicted in the winter. There is nothing in the Residential Tenancies Act that prevents a tenant from being evicted during the winter months.

There are different reasons for evicting a tenant. For some reasons, a landlord can only evict a tenant at the end of the tenancy agreement (at the end of a lease) – in most of these situations, the tenant has not done anything wrong, but the landlord needs the unit back. Other reasons allow a landlord to evict a tenant in the middle of their tenancy agreement or lease – these are generally situations where the tenant or someone the tenant let into their building has done something wrong.

A tenant can be evicted for having a pet in their unit only if the pet is making too much noise, damaging the unit, or causing an allergic reaction, or the animal or species is considered to be inherently dangerous. Even if the tenancy agreement has a 'no pets' rule in it, the tenant cannot be evicted just for having a pet unless the Board decides in an order that the pet is causing a problem, or that the pet is inherently dangerous.

A tenant cannot be evicted simply for having a roommate. However, a tenant may be evicted if the roommate is causing a problem for the landlord or for other tenants.

A tenant can be evicted if a landlord "in good faith" requires the unit for their own use, the use of an immediate family member, or the use of a person who will provide care services to the landlord or a member of the landlord's immediate family, if the person who will be receiving the care services lives in the same building or complex.

If the landlord gives a Notice of Termination the tenant should first read the notice to see why and when the landlord is asking them to leave. They may wish to talk to their landlord about the notice and see if the problem can be worked out. If the problem isn't worked out, the tenant can talk to their landlord about the notice and correct the problem as outlined in the notice (if the notice was given because the landlord believes the tenant did something wrong); or leave the unit as requested by the landlord; or stay in the unit and see if the landlord files an application against them with the Board. If an application is filed, the tenant can go to the hearing and tell the Member about the situation.

A tenant may also wish to get some legal advice from a lawyer or legal clinic.

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NHL

Players' union to get views on visors

The National Hockey League Players' Association plans to canvass its membership on visors.

Mathieu Schneider, a special assistant to NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr, said some 72 to 73 per cent of NHL players currently wear shields.

"By the sheer numbers of players wearing them, you're seeing a big change in visors," said Schneider.

"I'm certainly an advocate — and a bit of a hypocrite myself because I played my entire career without one. But the game's extremely fast. Guys come into the league now having had to wear a visor before. We're definitely going to look at talking to the guys about grandfathering them in."

That might involve polling the players on the issue. The last time they did that, in 2009, players were "heavily" against grandfathering in visors, he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Czech Republic

Racist chants earn fans one-year ban

A court in the Czech Republic has banned eight fans from a stadium for one year for racially abusing Philadelphia Flyers winger Wayne Simmonds in October when he was playing there during the NHL lockout.

Simmonds, who is black, was the target of racist chants while playing for Liberec White Tigers at the Chomutov Pirates on Oct. 28 in the Czech league.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyle Turris, centre, celebrates scoring a goal with his Ottawa Senators teammates on Sunday in a 4-1 win over the Winnipeg Jets at Scotiabank Place. Despite the rash of injuries, the Senators remain resilient — or, in their word, "pesky." JANA CHYTILOVA/FREESTYLE PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES

Team embracing #PeskySens label

NHL. Injury-riddled Ottawa relishes role as underdog with bite

Call them the Pesky Sens.

The Ottawa Senators are quickly getting known for their ability to overcome just about anything thrown at them, and it's a reputation they relish.

They're finding a way to win despite long-term injuries to key players, including star centre Jason Spezza, Norris Trophy-winning defenceman Erik Karlsson, starting goaltender Craig Anderson and forward Milan Michalek.

Despite the growing list of injuries the Senators (16-8-6) are on a three-game winning streak and sit fifth in the Eastern Conference with 38 points, three behind fourth-place Boston.

The Senators showed their pluckiness again Tuesday night, overcoming a 3-1 deficit and the loss of defenceman Marc Methot in a 5-3 road win over the New York Islanders.

The word "pesky" first started being used to describe the Sens last season by the media, but this year even the players are on board.

After Tuesday's game veteran defenceman Chris Phillips was overheard telling a reporter to make sure to put the hashtag #PeskySens on his tweets, and within the next few hours many Senators players did the same.

"If ever there was a time to use it (Tuesday) night was the time for sure," Phillips said.

Teammates were crediting Phillips for inspiring the team to take on that resilient attitude after the second period of Tuesday's game.

"I said a few words for sure to stay positive and not keep our head down or be upset about anything that had gone on for the first 40 minutes," Phillips said. "That's the way our team has been this year to make things happen in games like this and we were able to pull it off." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sens sign goalie

The Ottawa Senators have signed free-agent goaltender Andrew Hammond to a two-year entry-level contract.

- Hammond posted a 10-15-3 record with a 2.47 goals-against average and a .917 save percentage in 29 games with the NCAA's Bowling Green Falcons this past season.
- The Surrey, B.C., native Hammond will report to the American Hockey League's Binghamton Senators.

Homan slides into 'driver's seat' with 2 wins

Canada's Rachel Homan delivers a stone against Germany in Riga, Latvia, on Wednesday. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada's Rachel Homan faced her biggest challenge yet at the women's world curling championship Wednesday and came through with a pair of impressive victories.

She significantly improved her playoff chances in the process.

Homan entered the evening draw at the Volvo Sports Center in a tie with Switzerland for fourth place in the round-robin standings. The Ottawa skip played arguably her best game of the tournament in a 7-4 win over the Swiss rink.

The win allowed Canada to control its own playoff destiny.

"Definitely in the driver's seat," Homan said. "This whole time we've been in control of our own fate so we just have to keep going."

Homan beat Germany's Andrea Schopp 8-5 earlier in the day.

The 23-year-old Canadian is tied with Russia at 6-3, good for third place in the standings. Homan will play China on Thursday morning and close out her round-robin schedule in the afternoon against Japan.

"We needed two wins to be a little bit more comfortable," Homan said. "But it feels really good to play the way we did. I'm really proud of my team for pulling together and making those big shots and pulling through in the end.

"It was a really great day for my team."

The top four rinks will qualify for the playoffs. Homan can lock up a tiebreaker appearance with one victory on Thursday and earn a playoff spot with two wins.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

4 SPORTS

Gonzaga's Kelly Olynyk (13) reacts with his team during the West Coast Conference tournament championship, March 11. This year's March Madness tournament is packed with talented Canadians like Olynyk. JULIE JACOBSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

NCAA mad for top Canadian talent

March Madness.
21 of nation's 33 players have won regular-season awards

Canada Basketball is running its own March Madness fantasy pool, with one unique rule: Entrants must name five Canadian players to their teams.

There would have been slim pickings in years past. But there's not just an abundance of Canadian players this year; there's a wealth of star players.

From Gonzaga's Kelly Olynyk and Kevin Pangos to UNLV's Anthony Bennett and Nik Stauskas of the Michigan Wolverines, Canadians have taken the NCAA by storm, providing one of the most intriguing story lines of the tournament.

"When you can turn on (a game) almost any night during the season and see a Canadian playing, it clearly is a new dimension that we've entered here," said Rowan Barrett, executive vice-president of Canada's men's program.

Sports Illustrated dedicated six pages of its March Madness issue to players from north of the border under the headline Canada's Got Talent.

There are 27 Canadian men playing in March Madness and six women.

Olynyk, a seven-foot forward from Kamloops, B.C., and Pangos, a point guard from Holland Landing, Ont., have landed in the spotlight this season in leading Gonzaga (31-2) to one of the NCAA tournament's four top seeds.

Olynyk's breakout season earned him the West Coast Conference player of the year. The Canadian, who averaged 17.7 points and 7.0 rebounds a game, is also up for the John R. Wooden Award as the NCAA's top player.

Bennett, from Brampton, Ont., collected Mountain West Conference freshman of the year in leading UNLV, and is a projected top-five NBA draft pick.

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Notable Canucks

Among other award winners, Bennett's teammate Khem Birch of Montreal was conference defensive player of the year, Olivier Hanlan of Aylmer, Que., (Boston College) was the ACC's rookie of the year, while Sim Bhullar, a seven-foot-five forward from Toronto (New Mexico State), earned WAC freshman of the year honours.

MLB

Montreal group to determine viability of MLB return

Warren Cromartie is convinced that Major League Baseball can be reborn in Montreal.

The former Expos outfielder and head of the Montreal Baseball Project, a group whose aim is to bring the major leagues back to the city, says he'll know soon whether fans and the business community really want it.

His group and the Montreal Board of Trade launched a feasibility study on Wednesday to see if conditions are right and the interest is there.

"The group that I assembled will make it clear to everyone ... that we're serious about bringing it back," Cromartie said at a news conference. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Warren Cromartie, former Montreal Expo and president of the Montreal Baseball Project, makes his case for bringing the MLB back to Montreal during a news conference Wednesday in Montreal. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Three upset contenders to watch

Who will put on this year's slipper and make a run at the Final Four?

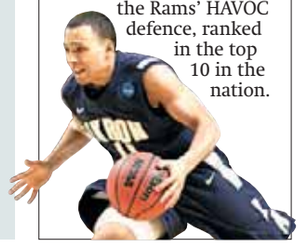
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
Photos by Getty Images

Belmont

The Bruins (11-seed, West) play a defensively-focused team in Arizona in the first round. However, the Wildcats have dreadful defence against the long ball — and Belmont shoots almost 40 per cent from beyond the arc, not to mention nearly 50 per cent from the field. Arizona has lost three of its last six, while Belmont is on a six-game winning streak.

Akron

Owners of a 19-game winning streak this year, the 12-seeded Zips could upset a former Cinderella in five-seed Virginia Commonwealth. However, the task is more daunting than it might have been before the Zips lost guard Alex Abreu for the season to injury. The team will rely heavily on future NBAer and seven-footer Zeke Marshall to escape the Rams' HAVOC defence, ranked in the top 10 in the nation.



Bucknell

The Bison (11-seed, East) aren't prone to turnovers and are a tall, strong team that rebounds well. Centre Mike Muscala averaged 19 points, 11.2 rebounds, 2.4 blocks and 2.4 assists this season for the Patriot League conference champs. If he dominates like he has all year against a smaller Butler team, Bucknell has the ingredients to make a run for the Sweet Sixteen.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	52	14	.788	—
Indiana	42	26	.618	11
New York	39	26	.600	12½
Brooklyn	39	28	.582	13½
Atlanta	37	30	.552	15½
Chicago	36	30	.545	16
Boston	36	30	.545	16
Milwaukee	34	32	.515	18
Philadelphia	26	40	.394	26
Toronto	**26**	**41**	**.388**	**26½**
Washington	23	43	.348	29
Detroit	23	46	.333	30½
Cleveland	22	45	.328	30½
Orlando	18	50	.265	35
Charlotte	15	52	.224	37½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	51	16	.761	—
Oklahoma City	50	18	.735	1½
Memphis	45	21	.682	5½
L.A. Clippers	46	22	.676	5½
Denver	47	22	.681	5
Golden State	39	30	.565	13
Houston	36	31	.537	15
L.A. Lakers	36	33	.522	16
Utah	34	33	.507	17
Dallas	32	35	.478	19
Portland	31	36	.463	20
Minnesota	23	42	.354	27
Sacramento	24	44	.353	27½
Phoenix	23	45	.338	28½
New Orleans	22	46	.324	29½

Note: division leaders ranked in top three positions regardless of winning percentage.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
Miami at Cleveland
Toronto at Charlotte
Orlando at New York
Milwaukee at Atlanta
Brooklyn at Dallas
Boston at New Orleans
Utah at Houston
Oklahoma City at Memphis
Golden State at San Antonio
Washington at Phoenix
Philadelphia at L.A. Clippers

TUESDAY'S RESULTS
Indiana 95 Orlando 73
Milwaukee 102 Portland 95
Denver 114 Oklahoma City 104
Sacramento 116 L.A. Clippers 101

THURSDAY'S GAMES — All Times Eastern
Portland at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Philadelphia at Denver, 9 p.m.
Minnesota at Sacramento, 10 p.m.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	31	23	8	0	110	81	46
NY Rangers	29	15	12	2	70	70	32
New Jersey	30	13	11	6	74	84	32
NY Islanders	29	13	13	3	86	96	29
Philadelphia	30	13	16	1	81	92	27

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Montreal	29	19	5	5	92	73	43
Boston	28	19	6	3	82	60	41
Ottawa	30	16	8	6	77	65	38
Toronto	29	15	12	2	86	83	32
Buffalo	30	11	15	4	79	95	26

SOUTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Winnipeg	30	16	12	2	80	86	34
Carolina	29	15	12	2	84	82	32
Tampa Bay	29	13	15	1	96	86	27
Washington	29	12	16	1	79	87	25
Florida	30	8	16	6	74	110	22

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	29	24	2	3	100	62	51
St. Louis	29	16	11	2	87	83	34
Detroit	29	14	10	5	78	75	33
Columbus	30	12	12	6	68	79	30
Nashville	30	11	13	6	70	81	28

NORTHWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Minnesota	28	16	10	2	73	69	34
Vancouver	29	14	9	6	81	82	34
Edmonton	28	11	11	6	69	81	28
Calgary	27	11	12	4	78	91	26
Colorado	28	10	14	4	71	89	24

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	28	21	3	4	95	69	46
Los Angeles	29	17	10	2	88	73	36
San Jose	28	12	10	6	67	74	30
Phoenix	30	13	13	4	79	85	30
Dallas	28	13	12	3	73	84	29

Note: A team winning in overtime or shootout is credited with two points and a victory in the W column; the team losing in overtime or shootout receives one point which is registered in the OL (other loss) column.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
Tampa Bay at Toronto
Minnesota at Detroit
Dallas at Colorado
San Jose at Edmonton
Chicago at Anaheim

TUESDAY'S RESULTS
Ottawa 5 NY Islanders 3
NY Rangers 3 New Jersey 2
Florida 4 Carolina 1
Columbus 4 Nashville 3
Pittsburgh 2 Washington 1
Buffalo 3 Montreal 2 (OT)
Winnipeg 3 Boston 1
Vancouver 3 St. Louis 2
Los Angeles 3 Phoenix 2

THURSDAY'S GAMES — All Times Eastern
Florida at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.
Montreal at NY Islanders, 7 p.m.
New Jersey at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Buffalo, 7 p.m.
Boston at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
Calgary at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Washington at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Vancouver at Phoenix, 10 p.m.
Dallas at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pt
Crosby, Phg	13	37	50
Stamkos, TBL	21	19	40
Kunitz, Phg	18	22	40
St-Louis, TBL	7	31	38
Kane, Chi	16	21	37
Staal, Car	14	20	34
Getzlaf, Ana	11	22	33
Ribeiro, Wash	10	22	32
Tavares, NYI	17	14	31
Vanek, Buf	14	17	31
Voracek, Phi	13	18	31
Duchene, Col	12	19	31
Ladd, Win	14	16	30
Moulson, NYI	11	19	30
Datsyuk, Det	9	21	30
Semin, Car	8	22	30
Zetterberg, Det	8	22	30
Neal, Phg	17	12	29
Toews, Chi	14	15	29
Stewart, StL	14	14	28
Parenteau, Col	12	16	28
Kopitar, LA	9	19	28
Sedin, Van	8	20	28
Letang, Phg	3	25	28

Not including last night's games

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Friends say you can do no wrong but for one reason or another you don't entirely believe them. Maybe you should reserve judgment until you feel more positive about yourself. When will that be? Any moment now.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You live by certain standards but you cannot expect everyone else to live by them too. Sometimes, you can be a bit too judgmental. The planets warn that the person you judge today could be the one judging you tomorrow.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Do you commit yourself to a course of action that could boost your reputation or do you play safe and leave things just as they are? You were born to take chances.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Everything you touch will turn out just right today. But don't get carried away as the planets warn your gains could be wiped out if you push your luck too far. Know when to stop.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The only pressure you will feel today is the pressure you choose to put on yourself. Whatever your problems, push them to one side and focus only on things that make you happy.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You seem to be on the verge of accepting some kind of deal, and it certainly looks good. But appearances can be deceptive and the planets warn you should wait a day or two.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
By all means, tell the truth today but expect some kind of backlash for your honesty. Other people will not be happy if you point out their failings, so ask yourself: Is it really worth opening my mouth?

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Even if you are following a path you have taken before, you could fall on your face today. That does not mean you should stay home — just watch where you put your feet!

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You may be confident that a scheme of some kind cannot fail but don't expect too much of it right away. The omens are good for the long-term but in the short-term there may be one or two setbacks.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You believe in telling it as you see it, which is good. But some people can be super sensitive to criticism, so don't overdo it. Tone down your comments a bit today so you are less likely to get a negative reaction.

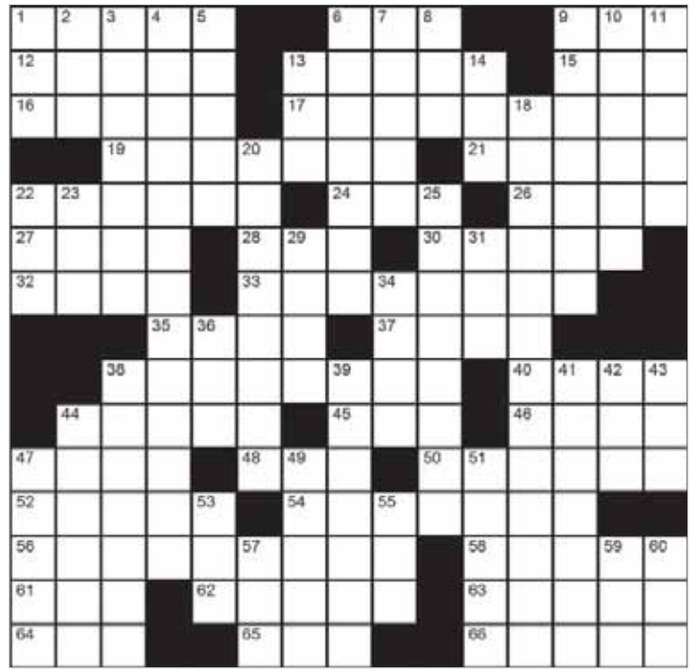
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Some people prefer to get others to help them rather than do things for themselves and one such person is beginning to annoy you. Let them know in no uncertain terms that you will no longer indulge their laziness.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may be tempted to ditch a project that has already been started and begin all over again but is that truly necessary? No, it's not. It will come out right.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

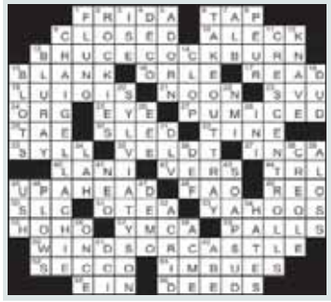
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Ms. Lake of TV talk
6. Inc., in England
9. Booker T.'s backup
12. Walk _ __ line
13. __ corn: 2 wds.
15. Queen's "We __ the Champions"
16. "You can __ _ horse to water..."
17. Seth Rogen flick, with The: 2 wds.
19. Connecting-stuff-to-a-PC spot, _ _ _ ___
21. Wander
22. Spa treatment
24. "The Addams Family" cousin
26. 911 respondents
27. Secret __. (Alias)
28. Dined
30. Roy __, Robert Redford's "The Natural" (1984) role
32. Ernie's muppet friend
33. Fajita need
35. Crown getter
37. Latin hymn: "Dies __"
38. Back together
40. Face part
44. Jacket sported by a '60s rocker
45. Ex-Bruin Bobby
46. Honeymaker's home
47. _ ___ _ (Edmonton sch.)
48. Chairman in The Beatles' "Revolution"
50. Spoke from the podium
52. Fishhook line
54. Beavers, whilst using their teeth
56. Toronto-based romance novel publisher
58. "Going to _ __-__" by Smokey Robinson & The Miracles
61. Scot's uncle
62. Kelly Clarkson's "Since _ __ Gone"
63. Camping needs
64. Riddle-me-__
65. "Hiss!"
66. Toronto football players, to fans

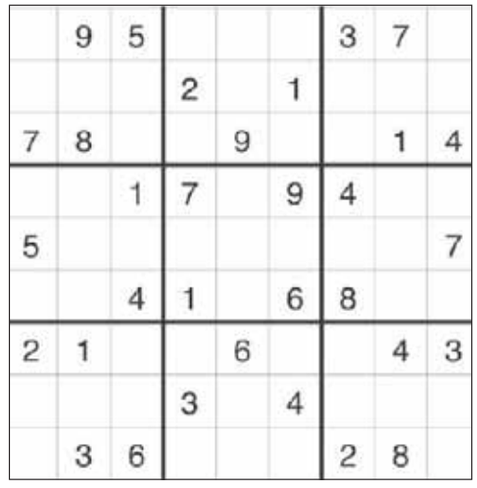
Down
1. Singer Mr. Donner
2. 'Favour' suffix
3. The Canterbury†Tales writer
4. Canuck sketch comedy troupe: The __: 4 wds.
5. "Dancing with the Stars" judge Carrie Ann
6. Sir Wilfrid __
7. Country singer, Travis __
8. Cdn. currency
9. Xylophone-like instrument
10. Defrauds
11. Sevens: French
13. Inflated id
14. Bouquet delivery co.
18. "Brand New Low" band from Sault Ste. Marie: 2 wds.
20. "Doesn't Really Matter" by __ Blonde
22. Little lie
23. 'Lemon' suffix
25. Fairly-near-the-stage area: 2 wds.
29. Ms. Spelling
31. 'Pay' suffix
34. Level
36. Italy's li'l locale
38. Sports official
39. Two-dollar coins
41. NYC's Brill Building output: 2 wds.
42. "__ Got a Feeling" by The Beatles
43. Heath Ledger/Orlando Bloom movie, "__ Kelly" (2003)
44. Generic grocery store brand: 2 wds.
47. One-named male vocalist
49. Chills
51. Ranch in "Giant" (1956)
53. Currency in Romania
55. Ms. Jillian
57. Some CFL players
59. Ronny & The Daytonas smash
60. Old spy gr.

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

1	9	8	3	4	6	2	5	7
4	7	6	5	2	1	8	3	9
3	5	2	7	8	9	1	4	6
8	3	7	9	5	2	6	1	4
2	4	5	6	1	7	3	9	8
6	1	9	4	3	8	7	2	5
9	6	3	1	7	4	5	8	2
5	2	4	8	6	3	9	7	1
7	8	1	2	9	5	4	6	3

Today
0°/-6°
Flurries
60%

Friday
1°/-6°
Flurries
40%

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